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# **UMI**

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**SEXUALITY AND SECRECY IN THE MEDIEVAL ARABIC  
ROMANCE OF MAJNŪN LAYLĀ**

**Ruqayya Yasmine Khan**

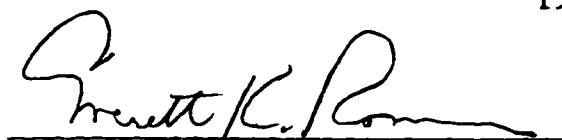
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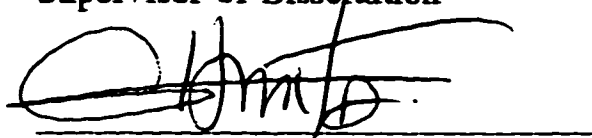
**the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies**

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**1997**



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## ABSTRACT

SEXUALITY AND SECRECY IN THE MEDIEVAL ARABIC ROMANCE  
OF MAJNŪN LAYLĀ

Ruqayya Yasmine Khan

Everett K. Rowson

This dissertation demonstrates how secrecy is intricately linked with sexuality in the medieval Arabic romance of Majnūn Laylā, and other 'Udhri love stories as recorded in the tenth-century Kitāb al-Aghānī. It argues that in the 'Udhri romances, specifically the romance of Majnūn Laylā, we see how medieval Arabic literature valued and assigned importance to what may be termed a dialectic of secrecy and revelation in the organization of sexuality. Although critics have discussed the theme of 'love's revelation' in Majnūn Laylā, it is uniquely the contribution of this dissertation to have elucidated the multiple paradoxes associated with this theme, especially as they pertain to depictions of chastity, courtship, and marriage in the stories. Among the most important paradoxes linked with this theme of love's revelation is that love or desire, in these medieval romances, is defined as both suppression and expression. This paradox, the conception of desire as both concealment and disclosure, has significant implications for understanding conflicts in models of chastity, courtship, and marriage as represented in these romances. This dissertation examines the rendering of these conflicts, and suggests that they may be better understood in terms of tensions between literary portrayals of old and new models of courtship and marriage.

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## Introduction

This dissertation is an examination of two hitherto neglected aspects of the medieval Arabic romance Majnūn Laylā, and the 'Udhri corpus to which the story belongs: sexuality and secrecy. Sexuality provides an extremely rich area of investigation in the 'Udhri romances partly because, according to both popular and scholarly views, they are considered to be "chaste" love stories in which sexual union is absent and marriage is thwarted. But just because physical consummation between the lover and beloved is not depicted does not mean that sexuality is not a salient topic in these love stories. Moreover, marriage--although not between the romance lover and beloved--occurs in every one of the 'Udhri romances. This feature's significance has been overlooked by those that have examined these stories. I maintain that concealed behind the romanticism and pathos of these stories are sophisticated insights into the nature of individual desire, and how it operates socially in overlapping, and sometimes conflicting, systems of conjugality. Sexuality may be broadly understood in two related ways: 1) in Susan Crane's words as "the generation, expression, and organization of [individual] desire..."<sup>1</sup> as well as 2) a social and cultural construct in systems of courtship and conjugality.

In a sense, I turn the Majnūn Laylā story--and by implication, the entire 'Udhri corpus--completely on its head. Whereas these stories are thought to be chaste love stories, I argue that they are scarcely chaste. Whereas they are thought to be about a non-marital relation, I demonstrate

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<sup>1</sup>Susan Crane, Gender and Romance in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 4. Desire here may denote any of a variety of desires (e.g., heterosexual, homoerotic, homosocial).

that they are not only about marriage, but possibly about competing models of courtship and marriage. Whereas they are thought to be about a dyadic love relation between a lover and beloved, I show how the lover ultimately acts as a go-between, as an intermediary that facilitates the beloved's marriage to another suitor. Whereas these stories are assumed to be about a male-female bond, I hold they are more about triangulated bonds in which tensions between two male character-types are important. Whereas these romances suggest that the chastity of the female beloved is important in her ability to wed, I maintain that a subtext in them ultimately renders her 'unchastity' as being significant.

A crucial component in the Majnūn Laylā romance is the semiotics of secrecy. Secrecy has received only a cursory glance by most scholars who have studied this story, or its 'Udhri counterparts, and if addressed at all, it has been considered in terms of a purported esoterism of the Zāhiri theological school.<sup>2</sup> But this explication of secrecy using extra-literary

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<sup>2</sup>In his love treatise entitled Kitāb al-Zahra, the Zāhiri jurist Ibn Dāwūd quotes a prophetic saying that enjoins secrecy upon the lover. The Arabic text of this saying which is known as the *ḥadīth al-'ishq* is: *man 'ashīqa fa-'affa fa-katamahu fa-māta fa-huwa shahīdun*. This is translated as: "One who passionately loves and is chaste and conceals his love or his secret, and then dies, is a martyr." It is quite paradoxical that the Zāhiri school, which vehemently rejected concealed meanings in exegesis (i.e., allegorical and/or metaphorical interpretations of the Qur'ān), embraced the use of verbal allusion, analogy and metaphor in love poetry. Joseph Bell in his book, Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam, points to this anomaly in the following passage: "An example is found in these verses related by Niftawayh from Ibn Dāwūd [Zāhiri jurist], who is said to have composed them on his death bed:

Why do they blame the blackness in his cheeks  
when they do not blame the blossoms on their boughs?  
If the flaw of his cheeks is the down of his beard,  
then the flaw of his eyes is the fringe of his lashes



frameworks merely begs the question of the role of secrecy in the narratives and verses of this romance, how it is deployed in the language and gestures of courtship, and what its connections with gender and sexuality are. I argue that, in the Majnūn Laylā story, secrecy has important semiotic dimensions that are especially pertinent to the generation and expression of sexual desire. I also treat secrecy as a linguistic phenomenon within the text of the romance,<sup>3</sup> and after identifying what I call a “dialectic of secrecy and revelation,” I proceed to analyze its existence in the rhetorical, syntactic, and semantic levels of the romance.

The presence of the dialectic of secrecy and revelation in this romance often belies what is going on in the story’s subtext. Most critics who have written about this romance have addressed its surface theme of an unrequited, tragically thwarted love. Yet, a close scrutiny of how sexuality, courtship, and marriage are represented and organized in the story yields a series of different interpretations. In this dissertation, I show that the tragic motifs of the impugning of the chaste beloved, or of the pining, suffering lover are actually screens for concealing the complex features of the

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On hearing these lines, Niftawayh exclaimed to the jurist: ‘You reject analogy in jurisprudence [a Zāhirite tenet] but affirm it in poetry?!’ ‘Because of overpowering passion and the natural disposition of the human soul,’ he replied...” Joseph Bell, Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1979) 27-28.

<sup>3</sup>Concealment and revelation was itself a well-recognized trope, as is attested to by Ibn Qutayba’s list of the subcategories of *majāzār*:

“They include: *isti’āra* (metaphor plus metonymy), *tamhīl* (analogy), *qalb* (inversion), *taqdīm wa-ta’khīr* (hysteron proteron), *hadhf* (ellipsis), *takrār* (repetition), *ikhfā’ wa-izhār* (concealing and revealing).” Ibn Qutaybah, Ta’wīl Mushkil al-Qur’ān, commentator Al-Sayyid Ahmad Ṣaqr (Cairo: Dār Ihya’ al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, n.d.) 15-16.

courtship and conjugal systems represented in these romances--features such as the serenading or poetic advertisement of a young woman so as to enhance her matrimonial desirability, or the role of homosocial bonds in this poetic advertisement of the beloved.

This is not to say that the romance does not have a tragic mode. The tragic in this romance has very little to do with Aristotelian notions of action and mimesis. It is confessional rather than mimetic. The understanding of language as a system of signification is at the root of the conceptualization of the tragic: the tragic is embedded in the confessional aspects of language--what language reveals, conceals, constructs, and betrays. It is concerned with speech acts, with disclosures of the self, and with the discursive aspects of language. Nobuhiro Nagashima has written that "failed communication...appears to be one of the main foundations of Japanese sentimentalism. Thus unlike the Greek tragedies in which Fate plays a vital role, the Japanese cause for tragedies expressed in literature, drama and popular music is often that of not being properly understood."<sup>4</sup> It could be said that the cause for the tragic in Arabic literature is the revelation of secrets.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Nobuhiro Nagashima, "A Reversed World: Or Is It?" in Modes of Thought: Essays on Thinking in Western and Non-Western Societies, ed. Robin Horton (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 96-97.

<sup>5</sup>Even in modern Arabic folk literature, the theme of secrecy and revelation, and the tragic qualities of this theme, are present. Dwight Reynolds relates the following regarding a theme of Arabic folk poetry: "...if possible, troubles and concerns should not be expressed to anyone; failing that, the *mawwāl* exhorts us to choose a companion to confide in only with great care, someone who will conceal our secrets from others. The result of a bad choice is in fact another major theme of the folk *mawwāl*--deception and betrayal by friends and trusted companions." Dwight Reynolds, Heroic

What constitutes the tragic in Majnūn Laylā is, in consonance with the multilayered quality of this romance (a matter which I will discuss shortly), a conflict that is cast in multiple ways. On a sexualized discursive level, the tragic manifests itself as a tension between a desire that is poetically proclaimed, on the one hand, and a secret "true love" that must be suppressed, on the other hand. A courtly strain within the romance deems tragic both the inability of desire to remain hidden and its proclivity to express and manifest itself in and through language. It also renders tragic the elusiveness of achieving a fulfillment of this desire once it has been revealed. On a sociological plane, the tragic also consists of a conflict between two different models of courtship and conjugality, between possibly an ancient consensually-inclined model of marriage (often along kinship lines) and a later model of marriage as a largely material economic transaction—with each model including its own conception of chastity. According to the older model of matrimony, "la chasteté 'udhrite" appears to be, in the words of an Arab critic, "...une 'stratégie sexuelle' fondée sur un principe capital: tout est permis sauf l'acte sexuel lui-même."<sup>6</sup> Subsequently, 'Udhri chastity is transformed into a conception whereby even mere speech about desire is rendered unchaste and ostensibly impermissible. On a historical plane, the tragic is configured as a conflict between a bedouin pastoralism and a religious didacticism associated with

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Poets, Poetic Heroes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 152, under *mawwāl*.

<sup>6</sup>Tahar Labib Djedadi, "Interprétation sociologique de la 'stratégie sexuelle' des poètes 'Udhrites," Actes du XXIX, Congrès international des Orientalistes: Etudes Arabes et Islamiques, Langue et Littérature, II, vol. 1, (1975) 54-55.

the nascent Islamic empire. On an existential level, it may be described as a conflict between individual expression and social mandates.

### Composition of the Romance

The Kitāb al-Aghānī (Book of Songs), containing the tenth century 'Udhri corpus, is the magnum opus of Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī. He spent most of his life in Baghdad, where he seems to have received patronage from various sources, but primarily from the Buyid court. In addition to the Aghānī, al-Isfahānī also authored a historical work and books on genealogy as well as edited the dīwāns (anthologies) of some noted poets.<sup>7</sup> He died in Baghdad in 967 A.D.

Al-Isfahānī, as one of the leading lights of the literary and artistic entourage patronized by the Buyid court, partook of an imperial courtly exercise in undertaking the enormous project of cataloguing Arab culture and literature in his Kitāb al-Aghānī. Commissioned by an unnamed patron to compose the work, al-Isfahānī took fifty years to complete the Kitāb al-Aghānī.<sup>8</sup> The request of the patron arose from a need to rectify the situation concerning an existing Kitāb al-Aghānī, which had been discredited primarily among court and elite circles.<sup>9</sup> The very project of rewriting the Kitāb al-Aghānī undertaken by al-Isfahānī was, therefore, to resituate this work onto a court trajectory from whence the first Kitāb al-Aghānī had originated. The project itself was a reclamation by the Buyid court of

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<sup>7</sup>Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī, Kitāb al-Aghānī (Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyah al-'Ammah li al-Kitāb, 1992) Preface, 1: 43.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 45.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., Introduction, 5-6.

literary/musical materials that were already among the common folk. The framework for the Aghānī is formed by a collection of hundred songs (*al-aswāt al-mi'ah al-mukhtārah*), selected more than a century before al-Isfahani's time, during the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd. These "hit" songs, gathered together by famous musicians of the court of Hārūn (e.g., Ibrāhīm al-Mawsilī), were essentially popular and well-liked poems that were set to music.<sup>10</sup> The Aghānī is organized in terms of stories or vignettes devoted to the various poets who composed these verses.

The Kitāb al-Aghānī is the principal source that later renditions of Majnūn Laylā drew upon, and it is not inaccurate to state that "the literary elaboration of the legend of Majnūn in Arabic circles never went beyond this stage..."<sup>11</sup> For this reason, and others, I have chosen to restrict my analysis to the Aghānī rendition of the romance, though I have also drawn on and discussed the Aghānī versions of the other 'Udhri romances.

A brief synopsis of the Majnūn Laylā story, as related in the Aghānī, may be delineated as follows: Three different beginnings for the story are related. The first beginning portrays them as childhood sweethearts who together used to tend the flocks of their families. Once they reach adulthood, Laylā the beloved is veiled or cloistered from her lover, Majnūn. The second and third beginnings portray Majnūn meeting Laylā in more courtly, refined settings. Regardless of which beginning is emphasized, after a brief period of courtship between them, during which Majnūn publicly serenades, and declaims indiscreet poetry about his relation with her, her family bars him from seeing her. Afraid that he might lose her, Majnūn

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<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Introduction, 2.

<sup>11</sup>Bombaci, Fuzūlī's Laylā and Mejnūn, 50.

then is shown asking for her hand in marriage, but is flatly refused by her father. Thereafter, numerous other suitors from her tribe propose marriage to her, but ultimately, she accepts or her kin accept a proposal from a rich man from a distant tribe. Majnūn consequently loses his mind, leaves society, and retires to the wilderness, but continues to recite beautiful poetry about her which circulates in the region. Even after Laylā is married, the lovers continue to have trysts when her husband is away, and in several anecdotes, it is related that her husband and lover engage in verbal jousts with each other over the issue of Majnūn's continued public declamation of poetry about her. Majnūn, however, remains in the wilderness of the desert, and finally, one day is found dead among the rocks by a tribesman who had sought him out for his poetry. Upon hearing news of his death, Laylā's father expresses regret over his harsh behaviour with Majnūn, and attends his funeral.

The Aghānī rendition of the romance of Majnūn Laylā comprises ninety-five pages of prose material interspersed with an abundant quantity of poetry. The prose consists of textual units of varying length--each unit termed *khavar* (plural, *akhbār*) in Arabic--arranged to form story cycles. I argue that each *khavar* unit, whether terse or long-winded, is characterized by some degree of narrative quality, no matter how minute. This is in contrast to H. Kilpatrick, who maintains that *akhbār* "...can best be translated neutrally as 'units of information' and should certainly not be interpreted simply as denoting anecdotes, since it can cover anything from terse statements of fact with no narrative element beyond the process of

transmission expressed in the *isnād* to lengthy historical accounts...<sup>12</sup> Each *akhbār* unit generally accompanies a set of verses, which may or may not be contextually embedded in it.

In the introductory section to the Majnūn Laylā romance, al-Isfahānī the compiler and composer of the stories in the Aghānī, primarily deals with the issue of whether or not Majnūn existed as a historical character. At the end of this introductory section, he presents a disclaimer from being held accountable for the authenticity of Majnūn's poetry.<sup>13</sup> Al-Isfahānī also briefly comments on his composition methods, and provides the names of some of the chief narrators and transmitters (he distinguishes between oral and written transmission) upon which he relies.<sup>14</sup> These comments suggest that he is concerned with assembling the anecdotal (*khavar*) units into an overall story context, rather than simply using them to showcase the poetry and songs attributed to Majnūn. I agree with Kilpatrick that there appear to be three narrative cycles in the Aghānī material on Majnūn Laylā.<sup>15</sup> The

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<sup>12</sup> Each *khavar* unit begins with an *isnād* or a chain of the names of the transmitters involved in conveying the unit. Hilary Kilpatrick, "Context and Enhancement of the Meaning of *Aḥbār* in the Kitāb al-Aghānī," Arabica 3 (1991) 352.

<sup>13</sup>The text of the disclaimer translates thus: "I mention from what has come to me of his sets of commendable and fine '*akhbār*', absolving myself of any accountability for them. Indeed, [regarding] much of his mentioned poetry in his '*akhbār*', some of the narrators ascribe it to one other than him, and those that relate his ['*akhbār*'], ascribe it to him. [By] presenting this stipulation, I free myself from the blame of the attacker and the one prone to criticism." Majnūn Laylā in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 2: 11.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>H. Kilpatrick has sketched an outline of the Aghānī assemblage on Majnūn Laylā in a 1982 review of A. Khairallah's book, and upon looking at it, I was happy to note that much of my own assessment regarding al-Isfahānī's organization of the material concurred with her findings. H. Kilpatrick, Bibliotheca Orientalis XL, nos. 1/2 (1983): 218-227. As she has

first story cycle is the fullest version, whereas the other two (especially the second cycle) are abbreviated in length.

Thus, embedded within the overall framework of the romance of Majnūn Laylā are multiple story lines, and even within one story cycle, the romance may present more than one anecdote on a particular episode, some of which contradict, and others which enhance and corroborate each other. For example, the romance contains multiple versions of how the lovers met and fell in love, what caused Majnūn to go mad, and of who ultimately played the pivotal role in the decision to marry Laylā to Ward (Laylā herself or her family). The unanswerable question of whether there is a “fundamental stratum of the tale,” or an “original text” of the romance raises the issue of its literary history, and here I am inclined to agree with Andras Hamori that though Vadet has argued that the ‘Udhri romances are “the romantic creation of the early ‘Abbāsīd age, projected backwards in history at a time when biographies of bedouin poet-lovers were a popular form of entertainment literature in Baghdad,” it is more likely that these romance-biographies did “from the first contain a core of poetry.”<sup>16</sup>

Apart from the chronologically different contexts associated with this romance, the reasons for this sedimentation in it are many, including

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shown with reference to the story of another, well-known ‘Udhri poet in the Aghānī, al-Isfahani could and did view compilation or the assembling of *khavar* units as a real art. The article, entitled “Aḥbār Manzūma: The Romance of Qays and Lubnā in the Aḡānī” (1994), argues that Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī, as the compiler of the anecdotal narratives (*akhbār*) associated with Qays and Lubnā, fashions a harmonious account. H. Kilpatrick, “Aḥbār Manzūma: The Romance of Qays and Lubnā in the Aḡānī,” in Festschrift Ewald Wagner Zum 65. Geburtstag, Studien zur Arabischen Dichtung, band 2 (Beirut: Beirut Texts and Studies, 1994) 351-361.  
<sup>16</sup>Hamori, “Love Poetry (Ghazal),” 205.



the oral transmission of the story,<sup>17</sup> which, of course, is connected to the issue of its chronology, and perhaps al-Isfahānī's own composition style which tended towards stressing ambiguities and digressions.

The issue of the historicity or status of any one particular story line or anecdotal version vis-à-vis others is not one that I have been concerned with. As Suzanne Stetkevych has noted:

The Kitāb al-Aghānī (*akhbār*), or biographical materials, on the early Arab poets have generally been either misused--that is, taken to be factual history in the modern sense--or else discarded because of their questionable historicity or obvious folkloric nature. But however unreliable they may be as a basis for factual literary biography, they nevertheless offer a rich vein of largely unmined mythic/folkloric gold. For however far back the association of the *akhbār* with the poetry goes and whatever its nature, this association, I would argue, is not arbitrary but semantic. That is, the anecdotes somehow reflect, reinforce, or complement the meaning of the poems or the archetypal image of the poet. Furthermore, the explication of the structure and symbolism of the many variant stories and anecdotes juxtaposed in

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<sup>17</sup> The oral transmission of the story raises the matter of the historically arbitrary nature of the links between its anecdotes (*akhbār*) and verses. It may be stated at the outset, as Michael Zwettler has argued in his The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry, that the verses "cannot be accounted a stable or intrinsic element of any but a very few such narratives," primarily since the poetry and prose constituting Majnūn Laylā in the Aghānī are clearly based on a long-standing (over two centuries) oral tradition, but also because the historicity of Majnun is so problematic. [Michael Zwettler, The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1978) 205] Al-Isfahānī himself is fairly concerned about this issue since it reflects on his own reputation as a reliable transmitter and compiler, and accordingly, he makes several disclaimers so that he may be absolved of any responsibility of having to prove authenticity regarding transmission. He acknowledges that many of the verses in the chapter are ascribed by narrators to poets other than Majnūn. In any case, the connection between the *khavar* unit and verses in this reported discourse is very fluid.

the Kitāb al-Aghānī narrative reveals that even apparently divergent or contradictory versions often yield what might be called the same mythic message.<sup>18</sup>

This sedimented quality of the text does not detract from the identification of it as being a romance, and a composition that fundamentally is concerned with the subjects of sexuality, secrecy, courtship, and marriage. What is important is that this sedimentation, in turn, yields multiple generic modes, as well as multiple interpretations, depending upon which story cycle or set of anecdotes is accented.

This multiplicity can be exploited to enhance thematic understandings of the romance. For example, I interpret divergences in the accounts describing who ultimately made the decision that Laylā should marry Ward-Laylā herself or her kin--as possible evidence of conflicts between competing marriage systems, a reading that strengthened some of my conclusions in Chapter Seven. Vadet, likewise, has argued that the *nasīb* of the pre-Islamic ode contains divergent models of courtship and marriage, and Hamori has pointed out that "only some...sedimentation can explain the diversity of scenarios" found in it.<sup>19</sup>

Multiple generic modes as divergent as tragic, pastoral, and didactic are found in the romance. "Modal terms tend to be adjectival," according to Fowler, and because "they are less historically circumscribed, modes seem to be 'distillations' of a [generic] kind's features."<sup>20</sup> Earlier in this introduction, I mentioned how the romance, consistent with its sedimented

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<sup>18</sup>Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993) 93.

<sup>19</sup>Hamori, "Love Poetry (Ghazal)," 203.

<sup>20</sup>Fowler, Kinds, 11.

quality, contains a tragic mode that intersects with, and encompasses other modal elements: pastoral, didactic, satire. Moreover, as alluded to above, the romance can be considered to be both tragic and not tragic, again depending on what is emphasized and accented. Hence, whenever feasible, I have chosen to exploit this textual sedimentation, and viewed it as a means to contribute to the wealth of the romance's meanings.

### Previous Scholarship

The paradigm that governs previous criticism of Majnūn Laylā is based on dichotomies such as 'Udhri vs. 'Umarī, 'Udhri vs. Šūfī, Arabic vs. Persian, nasīb vs. ghazal, Umayyad vs. 'Abbāsīd, Arab vs. European, urban vs. city, licentious vs. chaste, non-Islamic vs. Islamic, and so forth. These dichotomies either are concerned with 'Udhri poetry only, and do not treat the prose material of the corpus, or, if they do deal with the narratives, they do not go much beyond the stories' surface theme of "unrequited, tragic love." They are not reflective of concerns that I believe are very germane to understanding the romances. Questions such as whether or not mystical strains are present in the Majnūn Laylā romance, or whether it is a historical product of the Umayyad or 'Abbāsīd age are worthy of examination, but the romance also needs to be studied as a multilayered or sedimented love story in which issues of secrecy, courtship, sexuality, and marriage loom large. Moreover, though terms such as "tragic" and "tragedy" are frequently applied to Majnūn Laylā and the 'Udhri corpus, few scholars have critically probed their relevance to them.

### 1) Critical Works Devoted to Majnūn Laylā

Among the earliest works on Majnūn Laylā are 'Alī A. Hikmat's Romeo u Juliet, muqāyasa bā Laylī u Mağnūn (Tehran, 1941), and M. G. Hilāl's al-Hayāt al-'ātifīyya bayna al-'udhriyya wa al-sūfiyya (Cairo, 1960). Hikmat is innovative in adopting a comparative approach that juxtaposes Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet against primarily Nizāmī's Persian Laylī u Mağnūn. Hilāl is concerned with demonstrating that the main transformation Majnūn Laylā underwent as it moved from the Arabic to the Persian context was its integration with Persianized Sūfī discourses. Another early work, an important article in Russian by I. J. Kračkovskij translated by H. Ritter as "Die frühgeschichte der erzählung von Macnūn und Lailā in der arabischen literatur," (Oriens, Leiden, 1955) provides a bibliographical inventory of the sources that compose the early Arabic versions of the romance, and argues for the historical existence of Majnūn. In contrast to this, Stefan Leder, in a much later article entitled "Frühe Erzählungen zu Mağnūn. Mağnūn als Figur ohne Lebensgeschichte" (Deutscher Orientalistentag Ausgewählte Vorträge, Stuttgart, 1990) examines the evolution of Majnūn as a literary figure.

As'ad Khairallah in his Love, Madness, and Poetry: An Interpretation of the Mağnūn Legend (Beirut, 1980) questions Hilāl's point that in Arabic, Majnūn Laylā was an 'Udhri story whereas in Persian, it was co-opted by the Sūfīs.<sup>21</sup> He argues that the "Majnūn legend" in both Arabic and Persian "represents the rejection of established intellectual, social and psychological

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<sup>21</sup>Hilary Kilpatrick has written a review of this book, in which she presents a précis of the contents of the Aghānī version of the Majnūn Laylā romance. See H. Kilpatrick, Bibliotheca Orientalis XL, nos. 1/2 (1983): 218-227.

limitations and symbolizes the basic yearning of the 'I' to be at one with the 'Other.'<sup>22</sup> Khairallah, who bases his analysis of the Arabic version mainly on Abū Bakr al-Wālibī's thirteenth century dīwān, maintains that it is difficult to distinguish between the erotic and the mystical in Majnūn's poetry, between the 'Udhri and the Sūfi. But nowhere does Khairallah, who espouses an archetypal approach along Jungian lines, systematically probe the story's erotic dimensions, and attention to sexuality, courtship, and marriage is absent from his work. He largely passes over the issue of secrecy in the romance by noting that Majnūn experiences "the crisis of divulgence through poetry," wherein "divulgence" is connected with the poet's "covenant of secrecy" with God.<sup>23</sup>

Jean-Claude Vadet in his work entitled L'esprit courtois en Orient dans les cinq premiers siècles de l'Hégire (Paris, 1968) is among the earliest of scholars concerned with explicating how the grammarians, savants, and anthologists of tenth-century 'Abbāsid culture appropriated and altered the ancient Bedouin love stories. Vadet's examination of the tenth-century Aghānī renditions of the romances that I analyze in my dissertation forms a relatively a small section in his book. Though he does address subjects such as courtship and secrecy, he does not base his observations on close textual analyses of the romances themselves, but rather subsumes his discussion of them under the issue of which milieu--Umayyad or 'Abbāsid--is the

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<sup>22</sup>As'ad Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry: An Interpretation of the Majnūn Legend (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1980) 130.

<sup>23</sup>Khairallah, 68. Likewise, in his analysis of Jāmī's Persian version of the romance, he discerns a "dilemma of conflict between the secret of love and the irresistible drive to divulge this secret at the highest moments of intimacy..." p. 108.

formative one for these stories. Vadet makes little attempt to identify, much less discuss, the links between secrecy and sexuality in the stories, although, in contrast to most critics, he does draw attention to the importance of secrecy in the 'Udhri romances. But that he often traces the significance of "le Secret" in these stories to Zāhiri ethics and esoterism poses a problem because the love tracts such as the Kitāb al-Zahra authored by Ibn Dāwūd often drew from the motifs and themes of these romances rather than the other way around. Moreover, even in sources chronologically prior to the existence of the Zāhiri school, such as the amatory preludes of pre-Islamic poetry (*nasīb*), and the Qur'ān, references to courtship, marriage and/or adultery often are suffused by a theme of secrecy and revelation.<sup>24</sup> Vadet suggests that the importance of the secret in these romances is also a function of how the old Bedouin material is refashioned by the dictates of tenth-century 'Abbāsīd courtly culture—"Il n'est pas nécessaire non plus que la vie du héros soit traversée de grandes vicissitudes, l'essentiel est qu'elle soit un roman de la fidélité au 'pacte' et par conséquent au Secret."<sup>25</sup> By associating secrecy with the "Pact," which "recalls the memory of the absent

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<sup>24</sup> Qur'ānic examples include: (4:21) - "And how can you take it when one of you may have consorted with the other [*wa qad afdā ba'dukum ilā ba'din*], and they have taken from you a firm covenant?" Here *afdā* is employed by the prophet to mean an emotional and/or sexual intimacy associated with marriage, but the word also means "to communicate (a secret)." (5:5) - "And chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the Book before you, when you give them their dowries, contracting marriage and not committing fornication [*muḥsinīn ghayr musāfihīn*], nor taking secret paramours [*lā muttakhidhī akhdān*]." Also see the narration of the attempted seduction of Joseph in Sūrat Yūsuf, especially verses 24-35.

<sup>25</sup> Jean-Claude Vadet, L'Esprit courtois en Orient dans les cinq premiers siècles de l'Hégire (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1968) 359.

beloved,”<sup>26</sup> Vadet renders it a courtly covenant that is not devoid of mystical connotations. Only a brief section of his chapter concerned with the romances is devoted to Majnūn whom he sees as “un compromis entre l’amant scandaleux en rupture de ban avec sa tribu et le saint qui a tout quitté pour l’Amour et en vérité il semble avoir quitté lui-même tout bien humain, à part la douceur du Souvenir qu’il recherche de toutes ses forces.”<sup>27</sup>

André Miquel and Percy Kemp, basing their analysis on the complexity of interconnections between the motifs of *la sauvagerie*, *l’amour*, *la folie*, and *l’errance* in the Arabic versions of Majnūn Laylā, succeed in bringing to the fore some of the romance’s wealth of meanings in their book Majnūn et Laylā: l’amour fou (Paris, 1984). But despite their novel treatment of the material, again, they do not address the subject of how sexuality and secrecy function in the romance. Dotted throughout their criticism are references to European love literature, mainly to the Tristan and Isolde romance, and Miquel’s latest book, Deux histoires d’amour: De Majnūn à Tristan (Paris, 1996) is devoted entirely to a comparison of these two romances.

Turkish material on the romance of Majnūn Laylā is reviewed by A. S. Levend’s Leylā ve Mecnun hikâyesi (Ankara, 1959), and Hamide Demirel, “The Love Story of Laylā va Majnūn,” (1975). Levend rather unimaginatively conveys the Turkish corpus of narratives and verses on the romance, whereas Demirel focuses on Fuzūlī’s Turkish rendition of the romance. Alessio Bombaci also discusses Fuzūlī’s version in Sofī Hūrī’s

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<sup>26</sup>Tbid.

<sup>27</sup>Tbid., 373.

translation, Laylā and Mejnūn (1970), and in addition, he briefly considers the formation of the legend in the Arabic setting, as well as Nizāmī's Laylī u Maġnūn. In his consideration of the Arabic material, Bombaci translates a number of the prose and verse passages, but his observations are mainly concerned with what elements in Majnūn's love made it conducive to its being exemplified as model of mystic love.

Michael Dols' book Majnūn: The Madman in the Medieval Islamic World (1992) is a thorough examination of the subject of insanity in the context of medieval Islamic society. Included in the book is a section on the three character-types associated with the madman: the romantic fool, wise fool, and holy fool. Dols' scrutiny of the romance of Majnūn Laylā includes a consideration of the early Arabic versions, as well as that of Nizāmī's version. Of chief interest to Dols are the physical descriptions of Majnūn's madness, the causes of love madness, the association of *jinn* with madness, the medical reasons for his insanity, and whether love could be considered a cause or effect of his mental disturbance.

## 2) Critical works that address the 'Udhri corpus:

Other works deal with the 'Udhri corpus generally.<sup>28</sup> Over half of Shukrī Faysal's Tatawwur al-Ghazal bayna al-Jāhiliya wa al-Islām (1964) is devoted to Umayyad poetry, with an entire chapter on the 'Udhri poetry of Jamīl b. Ma'mar. Yet, his analysis of this poetry is very traditional,

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<sup>28</sup>A work entitled Al-Hubb wa al-Mawt fī Shi'r al-Shu'arā' al-'Udhriyīn fī al-'Asr al-Umawī by Ibrāhīm al-Sinjilāwī came to my attention at the time of the submission of this dissertation, and hence, unfortunately, has not been dealt with in this section. Ibrāhīm al-Sinjilāwī, Al-Hubb wa al-Mawt fī Shi'r al-Shu'arā' al-'Udhriyīn fī al-'Asr al-Umawī. (Amman, 1985).



organized in terms of the “origins, essence, and traits of ‘Udhri verse.” For Shukri, the “chastity” of ‘Udhri verse and the “chaste” love that it embodies are largely attributable to the influence of Islam.<sup>29</sup> His discussion is limited to the poetic output of the ‘Udhri corpus, and does not incorporate the prose material accompanying these poets’ verses. Salma Jayyusi’s discussion of the “‘Udhri love poetry and love tale” in her chapter entitled “Umayyad Poetry” in the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature I: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period (1983) succumbs to generalizations that do not do justice to the corpus. She rightly questions whether the assumption that these stories are “dominated by the spirit of Islam” is valid, but she describes them using phrases such as “stories of extreme situations,” “combining the sensual with the spiritual,” and “expression of a longing for individual freedom.”<sup>30</sup> Jayyusi alludes to the ‘Udhri theme of the lover whose beloved is married to another man, but she does not discuss the rituals of courtship and marriage in them, except to note astutely in passing that aspects of ‘Udhri courtship may be a reaction against certain conjugal models that were current after the rise of Islam.<sup>31</sup> Andras Hamori’s chapter entitled “Love Poetry (Ghazal)” in The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, ‘Abbasid Belles-Lettres (1990) provides a more balanced assessment of the genre developments of Arabic love poetry. Hamori points to some crucial traits of this genre; for example, he mentions

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<sup>29</sup>Shukri Fayṣal, Tatawwur al-Ghazal bayna al-Jāhiliyah wa al-Islām. (Dimashq: Matba‘at Jāmi‘at Dimashq, 1964) 247, 248.

<sup>30</sup>Salma Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in Cambridge History of Arabic Literature I: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period, eds. et al., A. F. L. Beeston, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 421.

<sup>31</sup> Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” 426.

the element of paradox and the importance of secrets that characterizes the 'Abbāsid ghazal.

The subject of sexuality is addressed by Tahar Labib Djedadi's La poésie amoureuse des Arabes: Le cas des 'Udrites. Contribution à une sociologie de la littérature arabe (Alger, 1974), but Djedadi, relying on Marxist theory, attempts to explain the presence of "chaste, unconsummated" love in these stories as a literary expression of the 'Udhri tribe's resistance to economic and social marginalization experienced in the Umayyad period. In an article entitled "Interprétation Sociologique De La 'Stratégie Sexuelle' Des Poètes 'Udrites," (1975) Djedadi argues that the 'Udhri beloved's "unproductive, desexualized" persona, and the lover's thwarted and alienated sexuality function as metaphors for the impotence felt by the non-urbanized 'Udhri vis-à-vis the Umayyad regime's expanding market economy.<sup>32</sup>

Eroticism, rather than sexuality, is the subject of J. C. Bürgel's "Love, Lust, And Longing: Eroticism in Early Islam as Reflected in Literary Sources" (1979). Bürgel classifies 'Udhri love as one of the major types of erotic love, and though he notes that the "'Udhrite demeanor [of chastity] may merely have been a disguise or strategem," he does not pursue the matter of just how chastity may have functioned as a "strategem" in the

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<sup>32</sup> Tahar Labib Djedadi, "Interprétation sociologique de la 'stratégie sexuelle' des poètes 'Udrites," Actes du XXIX, Congrès international des Orientalistes: Etudes Arabes et Islamiques, Langue et Littérature, II, vol. 1, (1975): 57-58.

context of courtship and sexuality.<sup>33</sup> He also acknowledges that there exists a social background to 'Udhrite love.

The 'Udhri romances are briefly addressed in a series of articles concerned with the subject of the tragic in early Arabic literature, and the parallels concerning the tragic between works from the Arab and European contexts. A. Ben Chehida's "La destinée de la tragédie dans la culture Islamique" (1984) briefly refers to 'Udhri poets such as Majnūn and Kuthayyir in his consideration of the question of whether tragedy has been "un genre essentiel ou *accidentel*" in early Islamic culture. Chehida, who views "tragedy as contemporaneous with conflict,"<sup>34</sup> maintains that a certain "mode d'expression dramatique" manifested itself in the pre-Islamic period through first, the 'majnūn' character-type, as later exemplified in the lovers of the 'Udhri corpus, and second, the Sa'ālīk poets.<sup>35</sup> According to him, the tragic aspects lie in the rupture of tribal bonds depicted in these works. M. Manzalaoui has written two articles respectively entitled "Tragic Ends of Lovers: Medieval Islam and the Latin West" (1979), and "Swooning Lovers: a Theme in Arab and European Romance" (1986). In the first article, Manzaloui compares abbreviated 'Udhri-style tales embedded in the medieval Arabic love treatises such as Kitāb al-Zahra, Rawdat al-

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<sup>33</sup>J. C. Bürgel, "Love, Lust, And Longing: Eroticism in Early Islam as Reflected in Literary Sources," in Society and the Sexes in Medieval Islam, ed. by Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid-Marsot (California: Undena Publications, 1979) 93.

<sup>34</sup>A. Ben Chehida, "La destinée de la tragédie dans la culture Islamique," in The Existential Coordinates of the Human Condition: Epic, Tragic, etc., ed. by A Tymieniecka, vol. XVIII, (D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1984) 334.

<sup>35</sup>A. Ben Chehida, "La destinée de la tragédie dans la culture Islamique," 334.

Mushtāqīn, Masāri' al-Ushshāq mainly with Ovid's Heroides. He assesses the tragic in these tales in existential terms, employing phrases such as "anguished predicament," "poignancy of the human situation," and states that the scenes of suffering in them are brought about "either by destinal forces or by man's folly or malignancy."<sup>36</sup> Neither Chehida nor Manzaloui provides any textual evidence from the 'Udhri romances, and the role of secrecy and sexuality in how the tragic is conceptualized in these stories is not discussed. Though Manzaloui mentions the issue of secrecy in the Arabic romances,<sup>37</sup> he does not pursue the matter, except to echo Vadet in observing that in the Arabic context, secrecy is not just a feature of courtly conduct towards the beloved, as is the case in the Latin West, but linked with the theology of the Zāhirīte school.<sup>38</sup> His second article undertakes a comparison of love-stories contained in the Arabian Nights, specifically the "Tale of 'Alī ibn Bakkār," with Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde.

### Conceptual and Methodological Frameworks

Understood primarily as a heuristic device, genre has played an important role in my analysis of Majnūn Laylā.<sup>39</sup> Genre criticism concerned

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<sup>36</sup>Mahmoud Manzalaoui, "Tragic Ends of Lovers: Medieval Islam and the Latin West," Comparative Criticism 1 (1979) 40.

<sup>37</sup>Manzalaoui, "Tragic ends of lovers," 38-39.

Also in "Swooning Lovers: a theme in Arab and European Romance." Comparative Criticism 8 (1986) 83.

<sup>38</sup>Manzalaoui, "Tragic ends of lovers," 38-39.

<sup>39</sup>Paul Strohm suggests that genres can be regarded as "mutable concepts, subject to cultural and historical variables" that allow us "to use them heuristically as an aid to understanding similarities and differences in literary works." Paul Strohm, "Storie, Spelle, Geste, Romaunce, Tragedie: Generic Distinctions in the Middle English Troy Narratives," Speculum 46 (1971), 385.

with Western literatures, as well as comparative genre approaches used by other critics of Middle Eastern literatures have provided me with certain guideposts without which I perhaps would not have investigated certain features in my story.<sup>40</sup>

Northrop Frye's analyses of genre (Anatomy of Criticism, 1957; The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance, 1976) combined with the observations of Alastair Fowler (Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes, 1982), and Paul Strohm ("Storie, Spelle, Geste, Romaunce, Tragedie: Generic Distinctions in the Middle English Troy Narratives," 1971) on the historical and cultural variables in genre criticism, have provided me with a nuanced perspective from which to understand the genre traits of my text. That Northrop Frye's formulations on tragic *mythoi*, arising out of his study of Classical and Biblical sources, have relevance to the medieval Arabic sources under consideration does not seem so surprising when one considers suggestions put forth by a previous generation of scholars regarding the possibility of Greek influences on early Arabic love poetry.<sup>41</sup> Fowler has argued that genres are much more like families than classes. By considering traditions of romance in literatures contiguous with that of early Arabic literature,

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<sup>40</sup>Throughout my research and writing, the shuttling back and forth between the medieval Arabic and European contexts has been a dialogic process, sometimes inspired and mandated by the exigencies of my own text(s), and at other times, instigated by discoveries made by critics studying European material or Middle Eastern material in a comparative fashion, discoveries that resonated richly with the content of my own material.

<sup>41</sup>As Roger Allen has shown, some medieval Arab critics, such as Diyā al-Dīn b. al-Athīr (d. 1239), vigorously denied the presence of Greek influences on the Arabic literary tradition. Roger Allen, The Arabic Literary Heritage (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 641.

namely Hellenistic and Persian literatures, we see how polygenesis and remote influences might be at work in the 'Udhri romances. Gustave von Grunebaum, who has addressed the issue of the influence of the Greek romance (100 B.C. - 300 A.D.) on Arabic love poetry, describes the Hellenistic pattern as intricately constructed "around the basic scheme of accompanying a pair of beautiful and chaste lovers who are separated and tossed about by the whims of fate on their perilous wanderings until they are finally reunited in blissful happiness."<sup>42</sup> Likewise, lovers in the classical Persian tradition of romance according to William Hanaway "have numerous meetings and separations and suffer the same wide swings of fortune that the Greek heroes do."<sup>43</sup> Hanaway maintains that there is direct evidence of the influence of Greek romances on the Persian romances, however Von Grunebaum argues against positing any chronological lines of descent between the Greek romances and the Arabic ones, and instead maintains the impact should be viewed in terms of "parallel influences."<sup>44</sup> Even if no direct connections are posited, exogamy or the influence of foreign models cannot be ruled out entirely, because Fowler maintains that genre codes often come to performers and writers randomly and indirectly, rather than by chronologically linear means.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Gustave von Grunebaum, Medieval Islam (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953) 305

<sup>43</sup>William Hanaway, Love and War: Adventures from the "Firuz Shāh Nāma" of Sheikh Bighami (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1974) 5.

<sup>44</sup>Grunebaum, G. Von, "Greek Form Elements in the Arabian Nights," Journal of African and Oriental Studies, 62 (1942) 277-92.

<sup>45</sup>Alastair Fowler, Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) Chapter 9.

My analysis of Majnūn Laylā specifically, and the ‘Udhri corpus generally, well supports Susan Crane’s observation that romance is “the medieval genre in which virginity, courtship, marriage, lineal concerns, primogeniture, and sexual maturation are most fully at issue.”<sup>46</sup>

Conceptually, I am concerned with how sexuality and secrecy function in these stories, how gender relates with sexuality, how virginity, courtship, and marriage rituals are represented in these romances, how these stories construe masculinity and femininity, and how male homosocial bonds intersect with male heterosexual desire. Throughout, I pay attention to how various types of desires—heterosexual, homosocial, homoerotic—are created, distributed, suppressed, and displayed in these romances.

In addition to Crane’s work, R. Howard Bloch’s fascinating book entitled Medieval Misogyny & the Invention of Western Romantic Love (1991) has been very useful in providing me with a comparative framework within which to understand the phenomenon of secrecy and its links with tragedy in the ‘Udhri romances. In his book, he discusses a range of medieval European genres—all concerned with tragic love—that persistently and paradoxically evince a concern with secrecy and revelation that also exists in the ‘Udhri corpus. Bloch’s approach—part philological, part gender-oriented—has influenced my analysis of the subject of secrecy in the medieval Arabic dictionaries, the tracts on “love,” and finally in the romances.

Methodologically, I have relied on a structuralist approach that identifies and analyzes a “system of relations and oppositions” in the

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<sup>46</sup>Susan Crane, Gender and Romance in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 4.

Majnūn Laylā story's interconnecting rhetorical, syntactic and semantic levels.<sup>47</sup> I analyze the exchanges, substitutions, inconsistencies, repetitions, omissions, and underlying patterns in these multiple levels. Substitutions, repetitions, and/or inconsistencies in the verbal texture of the romance were important in uncovering certain key motifs. Attention to the rhetorical and verbal texture of the story, for example, its 'code' words and phrases, and their etymological and lexical dimensions, has been a part of the methodology employed. The text's frequent use of the word *hāma* and its derivatives, for instance, alerted me to the rich polysemy of the motif of 'wandering' in the story.<sup>48</sup> This discovery, combined with a recognition of the parallel importance of 'wandering' or 'errancy' in European medieval romance led me to use some of Patricia Parker's formulations in her Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode (1979). René Girard's works, including Violence and the Sacred, and Eve K. Sedgwick's book entitled Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire have been helpful in discerning the structural patterns in the romance, such as the existence of triangulations, and the organization of sexuality in these triangles. An analysis of these triangulations was

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<sup>47</sup>Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975) 10-11. Culler divides these relations and oppositions into three categories: 1) syntagmatic relations 2) paradigmatic relations, 3) binary oppositions. Culler, Poetics, 13. Regarding the three levels I mention, Todorov describes these as semantic (themes), syntactic (narrative structure), verbal (aspects of rhetoric). Tzvetan Todorov, The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre, trans. R. Howard, (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1973). Peter Heath uses Todorov's scheme in his article, "Romance as Genre in 'Thousand and One Nights,'" Journal of Arabic Literature, XVIII, 1987.

<sup>48</sup>The locus classicus for this usage of the word is in the Qur'ān (26: 224-226)--a matter that I discuss in Chapter Five of my dissertation.



instrumental in throwing into sharp relief an element that is present in all the 'Udhri stories, but the significance of which has been largely ignored by critics, i.e., the beloved's marriage to a 'non-lover.' This analysis further shed light on the paradoxes associated with the motifs of chastity in the romance. Girard's theory of sacrifice was also important in elucidating the connections between secrecy and sexuality found in the romance.

Contextualization in my analysis is accomplished through a reliance on historical markers within the text of the romance, as well as on pertinent external sources--sources such as genealogical works on the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a, information from secondary sources on this tribe's political position in the early Islamic state and on the significance of the 'north vs. south' tribal rivalry, and anthropological writing on the conjugal systems of early Arabia.

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The dissertation consists of six chapters. In the next chapter, Chapter Two, the motif of impugned virginity or 'love revealed' in the love story of Majnūn Laylā is set within the generic conventions of tragic romance. Attention is drawn to Majnūn's ties with two different types of male-male relations, and the textual evidence for his homosocial bonds with other 'Udhri poets is introduced and discussed. Chapter Three examines the tragic as a historical conflict between 'things Bedouin and Islamic,' but also focuses on the literary motifs of wildness and madness as an aspect of the pastoralism of the story. A dialectic of secrecy and revelation is the primary subject of Chapter Four. The chapter elucidates the links between desire and

rhetorical language in the romance's portrayal of courtship, and brings to the fore the gender components of the dialectic of secrecy and revelation.

Chapter Five, by tracing the usage of the word *hāma* and its derivatives throughout the text, and by building on the word's semantic resonances with the concept of 'errancy' in medieval European romance, presents a multi-layered analysis of the various meanings embraced by the motif of wandering so prominent in the story. In Chapter Six, I provide an inventory of the permutations of the triangle in the romance, and the connections between triangulation, secrecy, and female 'unchastity' are elaborated. Chapter Seven argues that the lover actually functions as an intermediary that facilitates the marriage of the beloved to another suitor. Based on historical and anthropological evidence about marriage systems in early Arabia, the second half of this chapter raises the possibility of whether the lover's role as an intermediary is not a vestige of an older conjugal system that has been superceded by a new model of courtship and matrimony.

I have appended on to the text of the dissertation a copy of the rendition of the Majnūn Laylā romance from the Kitāb al-Aghānī. It is important to note that the page numbers of the citations mentioned in the dissertation refer to the rendition's own pagination, and not to the consecutive numbering of the dissertation.

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## Chapter Two: A Tale of Poetic Passion vs. Society

### 'Love Revealed'

In the romance of Majnūn Laylā as recorded in the Kitāb al-Aghānī it is the gravity of Majnūn's indiscretion, i.e., his publicly uttering verses impugning Laylā's virginity, that causes him to lose her. According to Majnūn's father:

When the matter between him and her was disclosed, her father was averse to allowing him to marry her since their situation had come out in the open--so he married her to another. (15)

In the Aghānī's version of the romance, no other reason is cited as being the cause for the separation of the lovers except Majnūn's indiscretion. It is also made clear that his indiscretion consisted of a public speech act: he lost Laylā because of poetry he publicly uttered yet what is not made explicit (though it is very implicit throughout the romance) is that these verses were taboo because they impugned his beloved's chastity. In fact, al-Isfahānī (consistent with his aim of entertaining the reader) allows for the suspense in the romance to continuously mount by not informing his audience of the text of these fateful verses until the very end of the romance.

That it was specifically Laylā's reputation as a virgin that was at stake is apparent from her father's summary refusal of Majnūn's marriage proposal after the spread of scandal and his quick acceptance of a proposal from a man from another tribe. Despite desperate attempts on the part of Majnūn's family to persuade him otherwise, he categorically refused any thought of union between Majnūn and his daughter, citing the stigma his

daughter would be branded with as well as his own reputation. In response to their pleas, he exclaimed:

[Should I then] disgrace myself and my clan and bring upon myself that which has never befallen anyone of the Arabs and brand my daughter with a shameful stigma [*mīsam faḍīḥa*]! (21)

The use of the Arabic phrase *mīsam faḍīḥa* is telling. The word *mīsam* means 'a physical mark or impress' but it may be used to symbolize a stain or blot on a person's moral character and reputation.

It is noteworthy that, in the aforecited quotation, Laylā's father expresses as much outrage over the damage to his honor and that of his male kin, as over the reputed loss of his daughter's chastity. This may partly explain why the 'damage-control' action undertaken by her father does not involve the marriage of the slanderer to his daughter, for it may be validly asked: why is Majnūn, the slanderer, not permitted to marry the woman he has dishonored and thereby, restore her honor? It is likely that because scandal immediately followed by a marriage between the scandalous parties would have merely confirmed the worst being imagined about them by the public, the story depicts an attempt by Laylā's father to erase or, at least, mitigate this scandal through the marriage of his daughter to another man. To prove that the 'goods' are not tainted, their saleability to another customer must be demonstrated. But if Majnūn's indiscretion is perceived by Laylā's father to be more of an affront to his honor than to her honor, then the act of marrying the poet's beloved to another man would also seem calculated to punish Majnūn as much as to control the damage done to his honor and Laylā's reputation. Lila Abu-Lughod's

insight into "why kinsmen are more dishonored than the woman herself...,"<sup>1</sup> though it is based on the customs of modern Bedouin tribes, also seems to be pertinent to our romance:

If we understand women's chastity as an aspect of deference, however, we can see how Bedouins interpret infractions as acts of insubordination and insolence. Because men's positions in the hierarchy are validated by the voluntary deference shown them by their dependents, withdrawal of this respect challenges men's authority and undermines their positions.<sup>2</sup>

We learn about these scandalous verses in a most revealing scene (surfacing at the end of the story, as mentioned above) which consists of a visit by Qays ibn Dharīḥ (fellow Bedouin love-poet and namesake of Majnūn) to Laylā. Qays ibn Dharīḥ at first visits Majnūn, and the latter asks him to convey his greetings to Laylā. When Qays goes to see Laylā and conveys Majnūn's regards, Laylā bursts out in anger:

If I had known you were his messenger, I would not have welcomed you! Tell him from me: 'What about your saying,

*'A night, in the valley of al-Ghayl, O Umm Mālik,  
refused,  
To give you anything other than [except] a true love  
that does not lie...  
Indeed, you have caused an echo to resound,  
O Umm Mālik  
Which, goes wherever the wind takes it.'*

Tell me about this night of al-Ghayl, which night was it? Have I ever been alone with you in the

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<sup>1</sup>Lila Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments, Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) 158.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 158.

Ghayl or elsewhere, day or night?' (94)

The word "night" here is personified, "a night refused" and in a strange case of reverse attribution (given that the beloved's name is Laylā which means "night"), the word is linked with Majnūn. Majnūn, during a night, refused to Laylā "anything but a true love that does not lie."<sup>3</sup>

In the quotation cited above, regardless of who the refuser was (whether it was Majnūn or even Laylā), the inference is that what was rejected was something "other than a true love." That is, what was rejected was a type of dishonorable love or a 'less than true love.' This itself was more than sufficient to cause a scandal. However the implication, also present in the verses, of the lovers having been alone during a night wreaked havoc on their reputations, especially that of Laylā. The second hemistich contains an allusion to the oncoming scandal. The beloved (like the verses about her) has caused an echo to resound and the wind (like gossip) causes the continuing reverberations of the echo; Laylā's name is everywhere, its echo is to be heard everywhere.

Indisputably, the most immediately damaging consequence of these verses was the impugment of Laylā's virginity. As is evident from Laylā's reaction, the mere hint, in the verses, of her having been alone with Majnūn

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<sup>3</sup>This "true love that does not lie" tallies with one of the varieties of love enumerated by Ibn Ḥazm in his famous handbook on love. Ibn Ḥazm declares that the "the only kind of love that lasts [*allāhī lā fanā lahā illā bi al-mawt*] is the love of true passion [*mahabbatul-'ishq al-ṣaḥīḥ*]. All other kinds of love (e.g., love based on kinship, or love resulting from shared ambitions, etc.) fade with the passing away of their causes. Significantly, only true love is susceptible to a form of madness. Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī, *Tauq al-Hamāmah*, ed. al-Tāhir Aḥmad Makkī (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1975) 22.

(not to mention any exchange of intimacy between them) had imperilled her reputation as a virgin. As a consequence of the circulation of these verses, Laylā's virginity was no longer above suspicion. Gossip about her was being fueled by the implications of her being alone with Majnūn, especially the implications regarding her chastity.

According to the view of many critics, Majnūn's error is, as Michael Dols broadly words it, his "public display of love, his *tashbīb* - the rhapsodizing about a beloved woman and one's relationship to her."<sup>4</sup>

Dols states:

Qays' public expressions about Layla usurped the traditional Arab right of the families, represented by the fathers, to announce a marriage. Qays' public display of love, his *tashbīb*—the rhapsodizing about a beloved woman and one's relationship to her—violated recognized Arab custom. It brought shame and dishonour to Layla and her family.<sup>5</sup>

If this is the case, *tashbīb* would have to be cited as the cause for the loss of beloveds in all the 'Udhri love stories because 'Udhri poetry is nothing if not the performed rhapsody of a lover's relationship to his beloved. All the 'Udhri poets publicly identified their beloveds and publicly recited verses about their love for these women. In the love story of Jamīl Buthayna, too, the poet's *tashbīb* of Buthayna contributes to the demise of the love affair.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Michael W. Dols, Majnūn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) 332.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 332.

<sup>6</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, compiled by Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahānī, (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyah al-'Ammah, 1991) 8: 98-99.

Yet, it is not *tashbīb* as mere rhapsody of a beloved that destroys Majnun but rather *tashbīb* with satirical connotations, for which the literary antecedents are to be found in the pre-Islamic amatory prelude or *nasīb*. Since the lady of the *nasīb* was an object that was both desired and sometimes scorned, elements of *hijā'* or satire became intertwined with rhapsody in the *nasīb*.<sup>7</sup> As has been suggested by Vadet, this combination of public praise and blame of women sorely tried early Islamic society's values concerned with female chastity and matrimony.

Vadet has maintained that the conventions of *tashbīb*, as an aspect of the Bedouin conception of *l'amour-folie*, acquired certain negative associations with satire in the later context of Hijāzi poetry of the Umayyad period. During the Umayyad period, "la folie, sans espoir et sans remède...parce qu'infligée par une puissance supérieure, licence de propos qui dépasse la mesure et risque d'entraîner un conflit."<sup>8</sup> At this juncture, "l'amant plaisantim feigne d'être victime du isq," and *tashbīb* becomes "presque synonyme de satire, hagw," and thereby, a threat to the honor of the tribe.<sup>9</sup>

Nous craignons qu'il [le poète] ne dirige ses

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<sup>7</sup>"The inamorata is often said to belong to an enemy tribe, and thus she serves the double role of a person sought after, but also proudly rejected when her demands grow excessive." A. F. L. Beeston, et al., eds., Cambridge History of Arabic Literature I: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 44. Also, "...[Qays al-Ruqayyat]...used his great gift for writing love poetry to satirize the Umayyads by writing love songs on their women. As has been mentioned before, this idea was based on a tradition of love satire resorted to in pre-Islamic times...." Ibid., 419.

<sup>8</sup>Jean-Claude Vadet, L'Esprit courtois en Orient dans les cinq premiers siècles de l'Hégire (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1968) 103.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 103.



satires contre nous ou qu'il ne compose sur nos femmes  
des poemes d'amour *tashbib*," disent des Bedouins alarmes  
par la passion...<sup>10</sup>

Thus, Majnūn loses Laylā not simply as a result of a 'public display of love' but because his *tashbib* (specifically, his aforecited verses) revealed a satirical disregard of social values associated with chastity and matrimony. In other words, he loses Layla because he erred in almost unambiguously publicly risking his beloved's reputation as a virgin--in direct contravention of the 'Udhri code of chastity. It is this indiscretion and its link with the issue of 'chastity undermined' that frames him as the most transgressive of the 'Udhri lovers. This is why Vadet refers to Majnūn as a hero "plus moderne et moins tribal. Maǧnūn est donc un type, presque un héros à thèse," and why he describes the romance as "l'*adab* contre lui-meme."<sup>11</sup>

To speak of matters concerning virginity and sex was not against poetic convention. Certainly, some poetry of 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a, the famous Hijāzī poet, contained explicit content about his love affairs. Relevant here is a quotation which describes 'Umar contrasting himself with an 'Udhrite friend and saying:

Like myself he was a victim of love and passion for women, but  
unlike myself he would not secretly enjoy forbidden fruits and easily  
forget them afterward.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 103-104.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 368.

<sup>12</sup>J. C. Bürgel, "Love, Lust, And Longing: Eroticism in Early Islam as Reflected in Literary Sources" in Society and the Sexes in Medieval Islam, ed. Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid-Marsot (California: Undena Publications, 1979) 84.

Moreover as Bürgel notes:

But the permissibility for poets to say things at variance with a high moral standard...[was] expressly stated by an early writer on poetics. In his Naqd al-Shi'r, Qudāma ibn Ja'far says that a fine love poem does not necessarily imply a poet's personal experience or conviction and he must also not be reproached if what he says in his poems is morally reprehensible. What is demanded from him is not so much truth and morality as good poetic style and suggestive description.<sup>13</sup>

So why is it that Majnūn is punished for speaking about these things in our romance? As I will argue, the response may be that the romance of Majnūn Laylā foregrounds a particular kind of tension: Bedouin poetic conventions vs. Muslim social conventions. What was permissible as poetic convention was impermissible according to prevailing social conventions. In the romance, the opposition between love and society that is a feature of tragedy, is actually an opposition between the poetic rhetoric of love relations and their practice in the nascent Islamic society.

Returning to the main issue under discussion, an emphasis on virginity is standard in sentimental romance (as opposed to medieval courtly romance, in which the focus often is on social taboos surrounding adultery, not virginity). Yet in our romance, the emphasis is not on virginity *per se* but on its reputed destruction, and the fateful consequences this engenders. It is this feature, among others, that renders Majnūn Laylā a tragic romance. According to Northrop Frye:

A romance is normally comic, in the sense that usually the heroine's wiles or whatever are successful and the

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<sup>13</sup> Bürgel, "Love, Lust, And Longing," 84.

story ends with marriage or some kind of deliverance. Tragedy or pathos comes from some obstacle or accident which frustrates this conclusion.<sup>14</sup>

In Majnūn Laylā, there is no deliverance. There is marriage, but it is a coerced marriage and with a man other than the one Laylā loves. The broken-hearted lover futilely warns his beloved that this marriage will be like a state of widowhood:

*Marriage to him is like being a widow and  
the lack of him is like being wealthy. (15)*

In another set of verses, Majnūn compares Laylā's marriage to the penning and sacrifice of a domestic animal.

*Look there at Layla whose halter has been cut off  
from all except Thaqīf,  
They penned her in a 'fat farm' (ḥabasūha mahbas al-budn)<sup>15</sup>  
and sought to gain money through her, May their wealth  
decrease! (47)*

The word Thaqīf in the first hemistich refers to the name of the man to whom Laylā was married. Interestingly, in Aḥmad Shawqī's modern drama based on the ancient romance, Laylā refuses to sleep with her husband even after marriage, remaining a virgin out of her love for Majnūn.

According to Frye, a virgin who is sacrificed or remains a virgin symbolizes the "other principle [of tragic romance], i.e., "the separation or polarizing of the action into two worlds, one desirable and the other

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<sup>14</sup>Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture, a Study of the Structure of Romance (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976) 92.

<sup>15</sup>In the Qur'an, 22:36, the word *al-budn* is used to refer to sacrificial camels.

detestable.”<sup>16</sup> This polarization into two worlds, the idyllic and the nightmarish, is common to romance in general.

...most romances exhibit a cyclical movement of descent into a night world and a return to the idyllic world or to some symbol of it like a marriage...<sup>17</sup>

Consistent with the conventions of tragic romance, Majnūn Laylā, rather than being cyclical, reveals a downward movement from the idyllic to the catastrophic and inevitably ends in the separation of the lovers and the death of Majnūn. In the next chapter, we will examine the contrasts between these two worlds as depicted in our romance. Now let us return to the narrative with which we began our chapter--the narrative containing the exchange between Qays ibn Dharīḥ and Laylā regarding the fateful verses.

In response to Laylā's display of anger at Majnūn, Qays tries to defend his fellow poet and console her by asserting:

Indeed people have interpreted his verses in a manner not intended by him. Don't be like them. He [only] related that he saw you the night of the Ghayl Valley and you stole his heart.

(94)

Qays ibn Dharīḥ suggests that what Majnūn intended to convey by his verses was totally contrary to the public's interpretation of them. What he intended to convey was simply that upon merely seeing his beloved during a night in the valley, he “refused all” (in other words, insisted upon nothing) to his beloved except “a true love that does not lie.” Yet by introducing into public discourse verses that easily lent themselves to misinterpretation

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 83.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 54.

regarding his beloved's chastity, Majnūn gravely impaired her reputation and occasioned his own downfall.

The question arises, why is his character depicted doing this? Why did Majnūn's character risk the mere hint of impropriety in his discourse, knowing that thereby he would lose the woman he loved? Why did he paradoxically 'reveal' a love (i.e., hint at intimacy between him and his beloved), knowing that by his doing so, the love would cease to exist? Or as Alfrayd Farag puts it, why was Majnūn's character his own worst enemy?

Why does Qays publicize his love to the public, when he knows better than anyone that by this Laylā will be distanced from him? Why does Qays become the slanderer of Qays in the public spaces? And his [own] rebuker and killer?<sup>18</sup>

Yet another way of putting it is, why did he mar the very innocence with which he fell in love in the first place:

*I fell in love with Laylā when she was just a child with  
ringlets,  
When no sign of her breasts had yet appeared to  
playmates. (11)*

Moreover, if we shift our focus from the romance's main character to the corpus to which it belongs, the paradox becomes even more glaring.

Majnūn Laylā is a romance, belonging to the 'Udhri corpus of love tales known for their portrayals of ostensibly chaste and thwarted love affairs, in which a poet-lover loses his beloved precisely because of his indiscretion (through his poetry) regarding her chastity and by implication, his own.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Alfrayd Farag, Mu'allafāt Alfrayd Farag (al-Hay'a al-Misriyah al-'Āmmah, 1989) 133.

<sup>19</sup> In fact, the whole corpus comprises love stories in which poet-lovers fall

This paradox is compounded even further if we assign credence to the following narrative, transmitted by al-Isfahānī in the introduction to the romance.

I was told that the story of Majnūn and his poetry were forged by a young man from Banī Umayyah who was in love with his paternal cousin. He loathed revealing what was between him and her and so, he fashioned the account of Majnūn, recited the poetry which people relate as Majnūn's and attributed it to him. (4)

Assuming the credibility of this narrative, we confront the peculiar case of a youth concerned about discretion in his love affair, producing a poetic persona whose undoing is precisely love's indiscretion. In other words, we have the existence in Majnūn Laylā, of a remarkable example of a "tale of...revealed love," spun by a poet whose concern was not to reveal his love. His revelation, in turn, induces concealment, for the story's dissemination occurs through the device of the pseudonym.

We have a love story the core of which is characterized, in R. Howard Bloch's words, by "a logic of poetry that transgresses what it posits."<sup>20</sup> Bloch, in his important book on medieval misogyny, draws attention to a similar paradox as it exists in medieval, courtly French poetry. In a chapter arrestingly entitled "The Old French Lay and the Myriad Modes of Male Indiscretion," he notes:

Here we encounter a contradiction every bit as powerful as the paradox of virginity: that love only exists to the degree that it is

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instantly and passionately in love with women and then, just as quickly, lose them because of their socially unacceptable *tashīb*.

<sup>20</sup>R. Howard Bloch, Medieval Misogyny & the Invention of Western Romantic Love (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) 123.

secret; that secret love only exists to the degree that it is revealed; and revealed, it is no longer love. At the center of the courtly code of discretion and of almost every tale of so-called hidden love lies the logic of the poetry that transgresses what it posits, and not, as has been asserted...a conflict of good versus bad lovers...For if love must be kept secret to exist, then, as in the case of the virgin, there can be no speaking of it that does not imply its transgression.<sup>21</sup>

The analogy between a "secret love" and virginity that Bloch makes in this quotation is very pertinent to our romance. Just as love must be kept secret to exist, so too, must virginity be kept secret to exist--'there can be no speaking of virginity that does not imply its transgression.'<sup>22</sup> In the first-half of Majnūn Laylā, the motif of "love revealed" concerns virginity and not adultery. That is, unlike what is found in the courtly French poems that Bloch examines, initially it is impugment of female chastity rather than disclosure of female infidelity that constitutes the 'sin' in Majnūn Laylā. Yet both medieval Arabic and French love poems are characterized by "a logic of a poetry that transgresses what it posits,"<sup>23</sup> and in both the transgression takes the form of male indiscretion.

Bloch's phrase "the logic of the poetry" suggests that there is something inherent to the suppression of poetic language (secret) that logically entails its expression (revelation). He himself recognizes this when he asks "does this not mean that there is something specific to the secret that autonomously uncovers...that which language, or at least courtly language,

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 123.

cannot hide?"<sup>24</sup> He tends toward identification of the paradox mainly on the level of genre (poetry). Yet, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, this paradox is present in the entire Arabic discourse on love (a meta-discourse that embraced many genres) in the Middle Ages. But why are the stories characterized by such a logic? Why did Majnūn 'speak of his beloved's virginity' when speaking of it implied its transgression and the loss of his beloved?

The response to these questions must begin with an identification of the literary conventions being presented in the romance. As Frye has noted "'reality' in literature [especially in romance] cannot be presented at all except within the conventions of literary structure, and...those conventions must be understood first."<sup>25</sup> In subsequent chapters, we will address the function of these conventions, that is, the 'reality' behind them or the reasons for their employment in the story.

On one level, what is being presented in Majnūn Laylā are the conventions of tragedy. Certainly, Bloch is alluding to such conventions when he speaks about tales of "so-called hidden love" being characterized by the aforementioned logic that "transgresses what it posits." He himself notes how poems such as "La Chastelaine de Vergi" are characterized by an "intractable internal logic" and a "mood of fatality" through which the theme of "love revealed" is portrayed, and which ultimately yields to a "tragic mode" in these poems.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 122.

<sup>25</sup> Frye, Structure of Romance, 43.

<sup>26</sup> Bloch, Medieval Misogyny, 116-117. M. Manzalaoui, too, in his article entitled "Tragic ends of lovers: medieval Islam and the Latin West," compares 'Udhri-style narrative accounts of "the sufferings and deaths of



The paradox that we are confronted with and that Bloch points to becomes more comprehensible when it is understood that the inevitability of intimacy being revealed, the telling of a tale of love that should be hidden, is fully consonant with the conventions of tragedy. In fact, tragedy consists of this very paradox. After all, it is often the transgression of what is posited, the reversal of what is given, that constitutes the tragic. Moreover, this is applicable regardless of whether we are talking about this paradox at the level of the character's conduct or the structure of the romance. In Majnūn Laylā as in "La Chastelaine de Vergi," it is the transgression of a love that should have been kept secret that, in part, renders it tragic. Jean-Claude Vadet observes that "le héros de roman...est le héros parfaitement amoureux et fidèle. De plus, il aime à la folie, bien qu'à la longue ces deux attitudes soient difficilement compatibles."<sup>27</sup> Majnūn, as a tragic hero who goes mad, is characterized by this incompatibility between the stances of *l'amour* and *la fidélité*. What distinguishes Majnūn Laylā from the other 'Udhri romances is that the conventions of tragedy are most easily perceivable in it.

In other words, the conflict between Bedouin poetic conventions of love and Islamic norms that characterizes this romance is itself a convention of tragedy. What can be discerned in Majnūn's act of indiscretion and the conflict engendered by this act is an opposition between love and society and such an opposition is a feature of the tragic:

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lovers" imbedded in the medieval Arabic love treatises with Marie de France's *Lais* and the Tristan stories. Mahmoud Manzalaoui, "Tragic ends of lovers: medieval Islam and the Latin West," Comparative Criticism 1 (1979): 40, 43.

<sup>27</sup>Vadet, L'Esprit courtois, 360.

Tragedy usually makes love and the social structure irreconcilable and contending forces, a conflict which reduces love to passion and social activity to a forbidding and imperative duty.<sup>28</sup>

Hence, the tragic inheres in the conflict between the poet's desire to openly speak about intimacy between him and his beloved and society's conception of this intimacy as is evinced in its interpretation of his verses. The public reduced Majnūn's poetic expression of love to tabooed passion, an act that destroyed his reputation but especially Laylā's. Society perceived Majnūn's conduct as being socially unacceptable not just because he transgressed norms regarding what can be publicly said about intimacy, but more importantly, because the intimacy suggested by his verses is itself suspect and improper (the intimacy or love is "reduced to passion.") The poetic conventions employed by Majnūn invoke a cultural conception of passionate love that is unacceptable in Islamic social practices.

This last statement draws our attention to an incongruity present not only in the romance of Majnūn Laylā, but also in the other 'Udhri stories. Although publicly recited poetry about intimacy with a beloved is rendered socially taboo (in part, because of the unacceptability of this intimacy itself), the romance suggests that according to old Bedouin custom, the rapport between the sexes was relatively unrestricted. This incongruity can be discerned in the following lines related by al-Isfahānī:

When Majnun first fell in love with Layla, he used to sing her praises [*kathīr al-dhikr*] and visit her at night. The Arabs used to

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<sup>28</sup>Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957) 216.

regard as not unacceptable that youths or lads converse with lasses. When her family came to know of his love for her, they banned him from visiting her... (43)

As suggested by this narrative, there existed wide latitude existed in visitation and co-mingling between the sexes among the Bedouins. But the public articulation of love in poetry was not acceptable. This is an instance of Bedouin social custom or practice contradicting its own cultural views on love. The existence in early Bedouin culture (compared to the later Islamic eras) of a conception of passionate love as being socially dangerous and shocking along with relatively relaxed practices concerning the interaction between the sexes has been pointed out by Vadet:

L'amour-passion est chose inconvenante chez les Bédouins, nettement choquante, contraire aux mœurs et, semble-t-il, à la constitution de la société. Il ne saurait en tous cas conduire au mariage....A l'inverse de cette conception, on note une grande familiarité et une rare audace dans les rapports entre les sexes. Il semble que tout soit permis à l'exclusion naturellement du *'iṣq*, lequel est pur scandale.<sup>29</sup>

Vadet suggests that Bedouin society allowed for the representation in the literary realm of what it could not sanction in its social sphere:

Car le *'iṣq* est une individualisation de l'amour contre laquelle protestent les conceptions tribales pour lesquelles la vraie parenté est collective; par contre le *mizāh* offre infiniment moins de danger parce que, même s'il déclenche un petit incendie sous forme d'un échange de satires, il ne desserre pas l'emprise de la tribu sur l'individu.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Vadet, L'Esprit courtois, 103.

<sup>30</sup>Vadet, L'Esprit courtois, 103.

Courtship or *la plaisanterie* between a man and a woman in poetic discourse presented incomparably less danger than its authorization in society. This calls for a modification of an earlier claim. It suggests that Majnūn's act of indiscretion and the conflict engendered by this act is an opposition between Bedouin poetic conventions of love, on the one hand, and Bedouin as well as Islamic social norms and practices, on the other hand. It is fundamentally an opposition between 'love' and society.

Yet, what society deems a transgression, is to the *héro de roman* a badge of his passion. Society wants Majnūn to suppress the passion that he, as a lover-poet, must express. Or what he wants to express must be repressed according to the prevailing social norms. Viewing the story thus, we can agree with Frye that "on the one side of the tragic hero is an opportunity for freedom, on the other, the inevitable consequence of losing that freedom."<sup>31</sup> For the poet, social mandate or duty becomes a "forbidding" imposition. Torn between duty and desire, between obligation and impulse, Majnūn succumbed to youthful passion knowing well that it would cause him to lose all.

*I think that passion for her will leave me in a  
wilderness, without goods, without a family.  
Without anyone to turn to with my last will and  
testament,  
With only my camel and saddle as friends.  
My love for her has eclipsed all previous  
affections and taken a place which nothing before had  
taken.*<sup>32</sup> (46)

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<sup>31</sup>Frye, Anatomy, 211.

<sup>32</sup>Modified version of Alessio Bombaci's translation in Fuzūlī, Leylā and Mejnūn, history of the poem, notes by Alessio Bombaci, trans. Sofi Huri (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1970) 57.

Here we come to the issue of *hamartia* or tragic error. Majnūn utters risqué verses about his beloved due to an error in judgement brought about by the rashness and impulsiveness of youthful passion—an error that proves fatal. Society, represented in terms of the lovers' kinfolk, especially Laylā's father, views this error as a direct violation or transgression of social norms and imperatives. Majnūn's *hamartia*, therefore, is his passion.

Soon after this transgression, Laylā is married to another man, one Ward ibn Thaqīf. This is the final straw for Majnūn. He loses his mind and withdraws into the wilderness, into the desert. As'ad Khairallah has noted "he is the only love-poet [from among the 'Udhri poets] who is described as actually insane, and who leaves society in order to live and die with the wild animals of the desert."<sup>33</sup> Thus the romance of Majnūn Laylā becomes truly tragic in its enactment of his separation from society. He becomes a 'wild man' who chooses not to live with human beings nor to converse, behave or dress like them. Social rebuttal of him (symbolized by Laylā's marriage to a man from another tribe) compels him to abandon society itself. This is the final, fatal flaring of his passion and *hubris*: his categorical physical and symbolic repudiation of that which condemned his passion in the first place. Occasional attempts by his family and other parties to bridge the chasm between him and society fail. The wild man cannot be redeemed.

He is irredeemable but paradoxically he continues to produce finer

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<sup>33</sup> As'ad Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry: An Interpretation of the Majnūn Legend (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1980) 2.

and finer poetry. In fact, Majnūn Laylā is a tragic romance in which the hero loses everything but his poetry. Majnun's verses are what precipitate loss and yet this loss or defeat only enhances his reputation as a poet. Relevant here is a theory of tragedy which views the tragic almost exclusively in terms of a human being's defeated potential. However "it is a kind of defeat which actually confirms the potential."<sup>34</sup> Majnūn actually fulfills his potential as a poet through his defeat (i.e., losing Laylā through his indiscretion). What is constructed as tragic is how the individual attains his full potential through a transgression of social norms. He is thus both penalized and rewarded for this transgression.

Perhaps this is the significance of 'tragic waste:' the forces destructive of life (fate, fortune, the gods or whatever) paradoxically pressure it into its finest expression in the events which lead to, and especially those which immediately precede, the protagonist's death. In one sense what is being identified is a potential somehow passively realized in its very defeat.

We see, for example, protagonists learning wisdom through suffering, willing to know and endure their fate even as it destroys them. It may be that the individual, in virtue of a 'tragic flaw,' is partly responsible for his or her suffering. Even so, the extent of that suffering is usually disproportionate to the weakness (hubris, passion, ambition or whatever); to this extent the individual is more sinned against than sinning, and his or her potential is finally reaffirmed in a capacity to suffer with more than human fortitude.<sup>35</sup>

Tragedy constructs conflict as existing fundamentally between society and

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<sup>34</sup>Jonathan Dollimore, Radical Tragedy, Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 49.

<sup>35</sup>Dollimore, Radical Tragedy, 49.

the individual. As Hebbel puts it: “‘Tragedy is the conflict between the individual, in his most general human capacity, and the ‘Idea’ which through social and religious institutions both shapes and limits him.’”<sup>36</sup>

Frye marks this “conflict between personal and social loyalties” as a central feature of tragedies of passion.<sup>37</sup> The tragic, however, indexes the normativeness of both the punitive consequences of the socially inappropriate act and this act as personal expression that is valued by the individual.

Yet, consistent with the conventions of both tragic romance and what Frye calls “tragedy of passion,” Majnūn perceives himself as a victim of the conflict although he is its victim and agent.

The tragic hero is normally a person capable of being an agent and not merely a victim of violence, but tragedy is mainly a form in which an actual or potential agent of violence becomes a victim of it.<sup>38</sup>

Or:

The quality of music and poetry in [their] speech, the concentration on the pathos of [their] fall and a touch of youthful narcissism about [them] render them the victim-figures of the tragedies of passion.<sup>39</sup>

Concentration on the pathos of his misfortune, often in the form of blame of others, is a distinct trait of Majnūn’s poetry. The following couplet of his is full of pathos and more than a “touch of youthful narcissism:”

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<sup>36</sup>Raymond Williams, Modern Tragedy (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966) 34.

<sup>37</sup>Northrop Frye, Fools of Time, Studies in Shakespearean Tragedy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967) 55.

<sup>38</sup>Frye, The Secular Scripture, 66.

<sup>39</sup>Frye, Fools of Time, 63.

*A people may be tried but not like my trial  
And there exists no lot like my lot in  
the misery with you (65)*

He blames many different parties for his plight, including Laylā and divine fate. In this couplet characterized by a plaintive, complaining tone, Majnūn blames God for his fate:

*He decreed her for one other than me and so tried  
me with love of her.  
Was there not anything else with which to try me other than  
Laylā? (68)*

The parties that receive the most blame are his male kin, and Laylā's male kin. In this next section, we focus on this aspect of the tragic and its implications for understanding the romance.

### Poets vs. Patriarchs

Northrop Frye associates a conflict between father and son with two kinds of tragedy--the tragedy of order and the tragedy of passion. He observes that the tragedy of order is the fall of the older man, whereas the tragedy of passion is that of the fall of the younger man. The tragedy of passion or the tragedy of youth is one in which "the order-figure is an evil father-figure and the victim is typically a son or daughter in revolt against him."<sup>40</sup> Frye also suggests that there exists "a parallel between the victim of the passion-tragedy and the rebel of the order-tragedy."<sup>41</sup> In a passion-

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 45.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 50.



tragedy, the failing or vulnerability of the young tragic hero is constructed in terms of his rebelliousness and youthfulness. This youthfulness may take the form of rebellion against the father through obsession with an ideal that competes with that of the paternal one—such as poetic passion for a Beloved as an ideal of womanhood.

The conflict between masculinity as emulation of the patriarch and masculinity as loving a woman is at the core of the tragic in Majnūn Laylā. Just as in Romeo and Juliet the feud as “conflict between manhood as aggression on behalf of the father, and manhood as loving a woman, is at the bottom of the tragedy, and not to be overcome,”<sup>42</sup> likewise in Majnūn Laylā the tension between allegiance to norms of the father versus allegiance to woman is central to understanding how the romance partakes in the conventions of passion-tragedies.

#### Youthful Poet vs. the Fathers

In Majnūn Laylā, many narratives depict the feud or conflict as being essentially between two men, Laylā's father and Majnūn.<sup>43</sup> An existing patriarchy is most clearly symbolized in the character of Laylā's father, who is Majnūn's *nemesis*, the chief character that obstructs his attainment of the beloved, Laylā.

In the narrative concerning a visit paid by Majnūn's parents and clan elders to Laylā's father with the aim of persuading the latter to allow the marriage between his daughter and Majnūn, it is related that her father

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<sup>42</sup>Coppélia Kahn, Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) 93.

<sup>43</sup>In Jamīl's love story, as depicted in the Aghānī, the conflict likewise is constructed as existing chiefly between him and Buthaynah's father. Jamīl Buthaynah, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 8: 99.

adamantly refused even to consider the union. He declared that he would divorce his own wife were he to be compelled to go through with the marriage between his daughter and Majnūn. Majnūn, in his opinion, had brought unparalleled dishonour to his name.

To understand the full significance of Majnūn's act of indiscretion in the feud between him and Laylā's father, we must digress somewhat to the subject of the link between romance and ritual. The presence of ritual in romance is encapsulated in Frye's observation that "...in romance essentially the whole human action depicted in the plot is ritualized action..."<sup>44</sup> He further notes:

Narrative forms have to depend more than drama does on descriptions of rituals: hence the long accounts of tournaments in chivalric romance... [and the] highly stylized scenes of courtship in love stories.<sup>45</sup>

On the importance of ritual in romance, Frye states:

One of the major nonliterary social functions of myth is to explain or rationalize or provide the source of authority for rituals. In literature itself, the *myrthos* or narrative of fiction, more especially of romance, is essentially a verbal imitation of ritual or symbolic human action.<sup>46</sup>

If successful courtship culminating in marriage represents the ritualized action of comic romance, then failed courtship, in tragic romance is a representation of the disruption of ritual. Moreover if, as Frye suggests, one of the major social functions of romance is legitimating the authority of

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<sup>44</sup>Frye, The Secular Scripture, 56.

<sup>45</sup>Frye, Romance, 56.

<sup>46</sup>Frye, Romance, 55.

ritual, then tragic romance is the interrogation of ritual. In the tragic romance of Majnūn Laylā, failure of courtship, caused by Majnūn's impugment of his beloved's chastity, aborts and breaks the ritual process. To delve more deeply into how this happens, we turn to the definitions of marriage provided by W. Robertson Smith and Claude Levi-Strauss.

W. Robertson Smith, in his Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, has stated:

...the mere fact of the father's consulting his daughter's inclinations...does not change the essence of the marriage contract as a purchase by the suitor from the bride's father.<sup>47</sup>

Levi-Strauss, in his Elementary Structures of Kinship, has argued in this work that marriage is essentially a social ritual which consists of "...a most basic form of gift exchange [between men], in which it is women who are the most precious of gifts."<sup>48</sup> In his words:

The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects in the exchange, not as one of the partners...This remains true even when the girl's feelings are taken into consideration, as moreover, is usually the case. In acquiescing to the proposed union, she precipitates or allows the exchange to take place, she cannot alter its true nature.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>W. R. Smith, Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, ed. Stanley Cook (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1903), 103-104.

<sup>48</sup>Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex" in Towards an Anthropology of Women, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975) 173.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

Regardless of whether the marriage ritual is analogized as a commodity or gift exchange, in the Majnūn Laylā romance, Majnūn not only aborts but violates this ritual of exchange because he appropriates 'the commodity or gift,' through his verses, before possession of it by him has been symbolically sanctioned by its owner, Laylā's father. By so doing, he makes it impossible for Laylā's father to exchange his daughter in marriage with him. Thus, Majnūn's act of publicly impugning Laylā's virginity is taboo specifically within a context in which a new bride's kin play the major role in her transferral to a prospective husband's home. By publicly reciting verses suggestive of a physical intimacy between him and Laylā, he usurped the right of Laylā's father to pronounce and announce (i.e., betrothal and marriage), in a socially sanctioned manner, the transfer of his daughter from his home to that of a younger male.

Given the centrality of this marriage-as-exchange principle in kinship, as postulated by Levi-Strauss, Majnūn's violation of the exchange ritual was tantamount to his violation of primary kinship bonds. And given that "kinship is the very idiom of social interaction,"<sup>50</sup> violation of kinship bonds was tantamount to transgressing fundamental social laws. Majnūn's *hamartia* arises from the totality of his youthful passion for Laylā, a passion which blinds him into recklessly violating basic social laws.

Of great importance is the recognition that this crucial link between ritual and the conventions of tragedy allows us to partially address the issue, raised earlier, of why it is that the conventions are such in the romance or what is their function? If their function is interrogation of certain rituals--

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 169.

conflicting models of courtship, female chastity, and marriage are certainly at the forefront of social rituals that this romance scrutinizes. Actually, the entire corpus to which Majnūn Laylā belongs, the 'Udhri corpus, subjects such rituals to scrutiny. After all, "the symbolic spread of a romance tends...to go into its literary context, to other romances that are most like it in the conventions adopted."<sup>51</sup> We will return later to this issue of the function of conventions of tragedy in our romance and instead, turn our attention once more to Majnūn's symbolic act, that is his violation of matrimonial rituals.

The gravity of this violation is not just evident in the intensity of the feud between Majnūn and Laylā's father but also in the antagonism toward him expressed by his more immediate male kin (his 'aṣabah), including his own father. In the following sets of verses, we can quite clearly perceive the aforementioned tension between allegiance to norms of the father versus allegiance to woman that the poet-lover experiences:

*See how she was secluded and her guard made me take a solemn  
oath...not to visit her;  
And men whose ancestor is my father and her father, and who were  
exasperated with me, threatened me in the matter of her...  
For no other crime other than I love for her and that my  
heart is her pawn and prisoner. (68)*

Also:

*Folk say perhaps Majnūn of 'Amir wants consolation,  
I said: 'No way.' My relatives blame in the matter of Laylā,  
My brother, paternal cousin, maternal cousin and  
maternal uncle.  
They say Laylā is from enemy folk,  
If she is an enemy, she is a dear enemy..(38)*

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<sup>51</sup>Frye, Romance, 59.

Narratives, instead of verses, that depict his relatives reproaching him as well his response to them include the following:

And so, he lost his mind and his folk despaired of him and were anxious about his situation. They united together to confront him and blamed and reproached him for what [a fool]he was making of himself. They said: 'What remedy is there for you in this state? Were you to try to forget her, we hope you would be consoled...' Then he confronted his folk and said: 'Indeed what's within me is not easy to bear so diminish your reproaches for I will not listen to them nor will I obey anything anyone says.' (43)

And his folk were blaming and reproaching him. They heaped reproaches upon him one day so much so that he said:

*...My good is for one who desires my welfare,  
he will hope for it who is shielded from my evil-  
one can't feel safe from my evil.  
I don't share the opinions of one who has bad judgement and  
I don't call 'my brother' one who is not obliging to me. (42-43)*

Actually, these sets of verses and narratives not only portray how his male kin faulted Majnūn for his love of Laylā but also underscore the fact that the antagonism between Majnūn and 'society' (his male kin group) is very mutual. He rejects its norms regarding social conduct just as much as it ostracizes him for his social transgression. What is interesting is that he alternates between invoking both poetic and social conventions--depending on which set of conventions is most expedient to his argument.<sup>52</sup> Thus, he invokes Bedouin poetic conventions of love when he criticizes them for

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<sup>52</sup>I am indebted to Devin Stewart for bringing this point to my attention.

possessing poor judgement (i.e., if they don't know what true love is, they cannot judge him) and being unsympathetic to his interests. After staunchly defending his love for Laylā, he stresses established social conventions of *fakhr* and courage when he speaks of good (*khayr*) and evil (*sharr*) and threatens battle with whomever opposes him. Once he finds himself thrust outside the kin group, he redefines group membership based on his relatives' attitudes toward him and arrogates to himself the right to decide who will be included and excluded.

A more important aspect of the feud between him and his male kin consists of Majnūn's condemnation of Laylā's father and family, in general. Just as Laylā's father blames Majnūn for violating a code of honor, he accuses Laylā's folk of the same. He condemns them for selling their daughter to the highest bidder out of cupidity. In a set of verses permeated with his awareness of the bartering principle in marriage, he denigrates her family for seeking to maximize their material gain through the marriage of their daughter. Again,

*Look there at Laylā whose halter has been cut off from all  
except Thaqif,  
They confined her to a 'fat farm'  
and sought to gain money through her,  
May their wealth decrease! (47)*

It is noteworthy that Laylā's family is described as being economically disadvantaged as compared to that of Majnūn. Two separate narratives indicate this. First, in an account given by Majnūn's father, the father observes 'she [Laylā] could not hope for the likes of him.' Second, though Majnūn accuses Laylā's family of avarice and of marrying her off for money, Laylā's father is depicted as refusing an offer from Majnūn's

own family in which they are willing to hand over to him their considerable wealth and property were he to agree to a marriage between his daughter and their son. The latter is related in the anecdote in which a group of elders (including the poet's father) meet with and try to persuade the beloved's father.

We beseech you, by God the Merciful, to [marry him to her]. She is not, by God, nobler (*ashraf*) than he. And you do not possess wealth such as that [owned] by his father. He has appointed you the judge in the matter of the *mahr*, and if you desire that he dispose his money [and turn it over] to you, he will do it. [But], he [Layla's father] refused and swore that he...would never marry him to her. (21)

In a verse cited earlier, (i.e., *They confined her to a 'fat farm' and sought to gain money through her, May their wealth decrease!*), Majnūn suggests that Laylā's folk are culpable for both coercing her into marriage and for financially exploiting the marital union. Actually, there exists a discrepancy, in the romance, regarding the issue of whether Laylā or her family exercised the power to choose the husband. A narrative or two assigns Laylā this power but several show her kin choosing Ward. Most accounts relate that Layla's father was clearly the one to refuse Majnūn's proposal. The anecdote cited below is among the ones that show she was coerced into the marriage by her family. The phrase 'we will punish you as an example' quoted in this anecdote has an ominous ring to it and indicates that she was clearly threatened with a punitive measures by her kin were she not to acquiesce to their request.

When the matter of Majnūn of Laylā had become public and people were reciting his verses about her, he proposed marriage to her and presented her with fifty red camels and Ward ibn Muḥammad al-



'Uqaylī proposed to her, presenting her with ten camels and their shepherd. Then her family announced: 'We give her the option to choose between the two of you, she may marry whoever she chooses.' [But] they went to her and said: 'By God, you had better choose Ward or we will punish you as an example.' (14)

Publicly, her kin pretended that the choice of whom Laylā should marry was up to her, but privately they coerced her into marrying Ward. Perhaps, in accordance with new Islamic conjugal practices, her family felt compelled to announce to the suitors that the power to choose belonged to Laylā, when in fact, they exercised this power. Perhaps, they did not want Majnūn accusing them of having compelled Laylā into marrying Ward (an accusation that the poet-lover did proceed to make). This narrative and others imply that it was because of the greater value of his bride-price (due to the inclusion of the shepherd) as compared to that of Majnūn<sup>53</sup> that she may have been forced by her family to marry Ward. It should be noted though that the narrative states the *mahr* offers were presented to her (and not to her father) by the two men--again, a custom more in accordance with marriage practices after the rise of Islam.<sup>54</sup> Yet the romance's portrayal of

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<sup>53</sup> The socially inferior status of Laylā's family relative to that of Majnūn is in marked contrast to the example in the love stories of Jamīl and 'Urwa. In these two cases "the physical union between the lovers was prevented by the family of the girl, their motive being...the alleged social inferiority of the young man..." Emphasis mine, J. C. Bürgel, "Love, Lust, And Longing," 93.

<sup>54</sup> "In these circumstances, it may be realized that the relationship existing between father and daughter...was not clearly defined in the early Islamic period....This change in the payment of dowry, combined with other decisions of Muhammad, such as that women should be consulted in their choice of husbands, tended to remove control over their affairs from the women's male relatives and vest it in themselves." Ibid., 37-38.

the *mahr* issue is confusing because, though Laylā's folk are shown having materialistic interests in their daughter's marriage (interests of which Majnūn accuses them), a narrative I cited earlier also portrays Laylā's father adamantly rejecting an offer of a large sum of money and property made by Majnūn's kin.

After Majnūn's death, a slip is found in his garb containing a bitter couplet in which he curses Laylā's father and invokes upon him the same misery and wretchedness that he has himself had to face in his life due to the loss of his beloved. Moreover, he assails her father not only for the breakdown of the love affair but also for the madness that afflicts him after the reversal in the affair.

*O Shaykh, one who was not pleased with us, May you  
be wretched and not enjoy life's comfort and ease;  
May you be miserable just as you made me miserable and  
left me to roam with the perishing and not taste  
sleep.(92)*

As can be seen then, there is animosity toward a 'tyranny of patriarchy' in Majnūn Laylā.<sup>55</sup> The air of repressiveness, embodied in the figure of Laylā's father, is linked with this sense of tyranny. Conversely, to paraphrase Frye, 'there is something like the excessiveness of vitality, of youthful passion,' connected with the figure of Majnūn--something of a victim "whose nature is too big for his fortune or of a character of vitality fighting the repressive spheres of patriarchal authority that enfold it."<sup>56</sup>

Majnūn clearly blames the patriarchs and other male kin for the

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<sup>55</sup>Frye, Fools, 44.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 44.

rupture between him and his beloved as well as for his downfall. The Fathers appear to symbolize the norms and rules of primarily an emergent Islamic society. This society, according to the poet-lover, is penalizing him for his all-consuming love and passion for a woman. Majnūn perceives himself as being unjustly wronged by this society, of being made a victim of it simply because he is privileging his love for Laylā above the norms of a culture that views such a love as unacceptable.

Majnūn's accusations against Laylā's folk for marrying her to Ward ibn Thaḳīf because of his wealth point to a conflict configured in terms of senior and/or propertied males versus younger and less privileged males. Clearly, Majnūn, as a young male and one with fewer assets than Ward ibn Thaḳīf, is at a disadvantage in a social order that traffics in women and views marriage as a material transaction.

In the romance, Majnūn is constructed in opposition to this order in several important ways. First, as has been discussed, he is juxtaposed against it through his violation of basic kinship rules that constitute this order.

Second, he is set in opposition to it through his invocation of a poetic rhetoric that ostensibly valorizes a single woman as Beloved. Among the 'Udhri poets, in general, a monogamous love appears to be set forth in which woman is idealized to the exclusion of all else. With regard to the 'Udhri corpus of romances, Salma Jayyusi has remarked that "the metamorphosis [in it] of beloved into ideal of womanhood represents rebellion against polygamous marriage, cult of concubinage..in Islam."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Salma Jayyusi, Cambridge History of Arabic Literature I: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period, ed. A. F. L. Beeston, et. al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 426.

J. Bürgel has also remarked on the fact that in early Arabic literature (pre-Islamic and early Islamic), "all the great figures of love...are couples. Trivial as this statement may seem, it is of high importance within a society accepting polygamy, because it means that despite the permissibility and practice of polygamous relations the idea of true love was as a rule associated with a monogamous relation."<sup>58</sup> More accurately, embedded in some of Majnūn's verses is a critique of marriage as it existed in the early Islamic milieu. In so far as there are connections between the bartering of women, on the one hand and the practice of polygamous marriages, on the other hand, Majnūn Laylā supports Jayyusi's aforementioned assertion that the 'Udhri idealization of a single beloved reacts against polygamy.

Thirdly, his character is in opposition to this system by being constituted in terms of a masculinity that is not normative. The 'Udhri model of masculinity consists of a male whose identity is founded on his relations with a woman. Such a male privileges love over reason. In his conduct, he is very emotional, easily prone to weeping and swooning. This tearful, fainting lover of the 'Udhri corpus is not unlike "two manliest of all heroes" in European romances --Tristan and Lancelot.<sup>59</sup> He is unlike, for example, the Arab panegyric poet who though he possesses "no heroic deeds on which to base his own honor, yet [is] indispensable for the process of propagating the honor of heroes."<sup>60</sup> The heroism of the 'Udhri lover is based not on winning battles and slaying others but on being slain by his

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<sup>58</sup>Bürgel, "Love, Lust, and Longing," 112.

<sup>59</sup>Mahmoud Manzalaoui, "Swooning Lovers: a theme in Arab and European Romance," Comparative Criticism 8 (1986): 71.

<sup>60</sup>Dwight Reynolds, Heroic Poets, Poetic Heroes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 85.

Beloved. It may even be, as suggested by Mahmoud Manzalaoui, that the figure of the sentimentalized lover achieves its fullest expression in the 'Udhri corpus of Arabic literature.<sup>61</sup>

Certainly the 'Udhri model of masculinity is in direct contrast to the Islamic (and even pre-Islamic) meaning assigned to the term *murū'a*. *Murū'a* "describes the sum of the physical qualities of man (*mar'*)."<sup>62</sup> The term reveals

A conjunction of two contrary elements: One concrete (e.g. wealth and management of property), the other abstract and predominating. In the latter case, *murū'a* would be identical with good manners; in the former it would take into consideration the material conditions of life.<sup>63</sup>

The "first meaning originates in the Djāhiliyya, whilst the second is Islamic."<sup>64</sup>

It is important to note that Majnūn's character espouses a masculinity that paradoxically undermines a central tenet of the 'Udhri code--the code of chastity. In this sense, his is a masculinity that primarily challenges the courtly meanings of *murū'a* in an Islamic milieu--the meaning of "good manners and conduct."

### Majnūn and The Poets

In Majnūn Laylā, both of the aforementioned claims of allegiance to the father and of allegiance to a woman are ultimately forms of allegiance

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<sup>61</sup>Manzalaoui, "Swooning Lovers," 73.

<sup>62</sup>Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition, s.v. "murū'a."

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

to male-male relations. Thus, even Majnūn's obsession with Laylā is really an expression of allegiance to another male institution (i.e., the 'Udhri school of poetry) through a female Beloved. In other words, a model of masculinity that is based on worshipping the Beloved as an ideal woman is articulated in and for the sake of a male rhetoric about love.

Hence, the feud between father and youth/son, which is at the core of a tragedy of passion, is part of a larger tension between these two types of male-male relations in Majnūn Laylā. An analysis of gender relations present in the story reveals that structurally two types of male-male bonds characterize it. The first type of male-male relation is established along kinship lines ('*asabah*) whereas the second type of male-male bond is defined by membership to a community of young poets, i.e., the 'Udhri poets. Just as the main foe of Majnūn is Laylā's father, not surprisingly his main ally is another 'Udhri poet-lover--and his namesake--that is, Qays ibn Dharīh. This oppositional structure or polarity in the characters surrounding Majnūn is consistent with another feature of the tragic identified by Frye. He observes that the tragic hero is surrounded by both a source of *nemesis* and a faithful friend character.<sup>65</sup>

Of course, the locus for this conflict between the two types of male-male relations is the character of Majnūn. As demonstrated, the conflict consists of a violation followed by rejection, on the part of Majnūn, of the male homosocial bond defined along kinship lines. As already seen, after the reversal in his love affair, Majnūn's relations with his male kin are portrayed in very antagonistic terms. On the other hand, his links with other

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<sup>65</sup>Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 215.

'Udhri poets, in spite of his departure from the 'Udhri code of chastity, are inscribed in positive terms. Even his rivalry with these poets, as will be discussed, is just another form of male bonding. One could speculate that ultimately he rejects the kinship bond in the interests of consolidating the homosocial 'Udhri bond.

Below, I briefly review his links with 'Udhri poets in order to underscore the contrast between his relations with his male kin and his ties to fellow male poets.

#### Fellow 'Udhri Poets

Majnūn's affiliation with three famous 'Udhri poets--Qays ibn Dharīh, Jamīl and 'Urwa--is clearly inscribed in the story.<sup>66</sup>

Qays ibn Dharīh, as faithful friend and rival fellow poet, is aligned with Majnūn at both the beginning and the end of al-Isfahānī's chapter on Majnūn Laylā. In the introduction to the story, he is syntactically grouped with Majnūn in a quotation of al-Jāhiz:

People have not left anonymous poetry said about Laylā without attributing it to Majnūn and verses like it said about Lubnā, without attributing it to Qays ibn Dharīh. (8)

At the end of the chapter, Qays is depicted visiting Laylā upon Majnūn's behest. His fellowship with Majnūn is affirmed in his defense of the latter in the face of the scandal instigated by the verses about Laylā.

More significantly, Qays is shown directly interacting with Majnūn. In the narrative concerning their meeting, it is mentioned that the two have

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<sup>66</sup>Alessio Bombaci, in his brief survey of the Arabic material on the romance, observes: "The Bedouin poets are represented in the main by the famous triad: Qays ibn Dharīh, 'Urwa ibn Hizām, Jamīl al-'Udhri..." Fuzūlī, Laylā and Mejnūn, notes by Alessio Bombaci, 54.

been long wanting to meet each other and when they finally encounter each other, it is by chance. (93-94) Upon discovering that the person greeting him is Qays ibn Dharīḥ, Majnūn's joy is so great that he leaps up and hugs him. What do these two 'Udhri poets talk about when they meet for the first time? They unburden their hearts and sorrows to each other, i.e., they talk about problems in their love affairs and their feelings for their respective beloveds. As sorrowful poet-lovers, they have much in common on the basis of which they bond.

Qays is also invoked and his verses recited in a long narrative that ends with Majnūn's death. (87-90) In this narrative, a shaykh that wants to meet Majnūn and hear his verses is advised by the latter's transmitter to provoke the poet with Qays ibn Dharīḥ's verses (for "he is very fond of him") once having located him. The shaykh follows this advice and upon spying Majnūn, approaches him and says: 'Qays ibn Dharīḥ spoke well when he said....' Majnūn rises to the challenge of competition with another famous poet and even while expressing his admiration for Qays's poetry, he does not hesitate to say: 'He spoke well, by God,' "but I am still a better poet when I say..." He then shows his critical consciousness by comparing different poems of his own, as he continues saying: 'And if I am not a better poet in this, then I am a better poet in the following...'"<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry, 65. In Khairallah, pg. 64: Khairallah also mentions an anecdote from Abū Bakr al-Wālibī's thirteenth century dīwān on Majnūn in which Majnūn's prominence as a poet is "confirmed by an interesting device, namely that of having another famous love poet admit Mağnūn's superiority over him. When asked by the caliph if there is any greater love poet than he, Kutayyir 'Azza admits that Mağnūn is the one. This device is rendered particularly effective by choosing Kutayyir, Ğamil's rāwī, to be the judge, thus placing Mağnūn on a higher poetic level than Ğamil, who was the greatest love poet in the 'Udhri



The other 'Udhri poets with whom Majnūn is aligned are Jamīl and 'Urwa. The link with Jamīl surfaces in two forms: First, in the context of competition between the northern and southern tribes over which has produced the most "lovelorn of poet-lovers," and second, through misattribution of authorship, i.e., verses linked with Jamīl turn out to be those of Majnūn. Jamīl himself, as indicated by the Aghānī rendition of the romance of Jamīl Buthaynah, had strong bonds with other love poets. This romance depicts many scenes in which Jamīl and his *rāwī*, Kuthayyir, as well as 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a, are shown reciting verses to each other, both competing with, and admiring each other. One anecdote describes how Jamīl, upon hearing 'Umar's declamations of love verses, is awed and humbled into conceding that he cannot match 'Umar's poetic abilities.<sup>68</sup>

Regarding 'Urwa, Majnūn himself invokes his tie to this poet through the following verses:

*I marvel that the story of 'Urwa the 'Udhrite is  
passed from tribe to tribe.  
'Urwa died a peaceful death. I, instead, die daily. (84)*

Again, by describing himself as one who is daily 'slain by love,' as opposed to 'Urwa who died 'a peaceful death,' Majnūn implies that he is a nobler warrior in the arena of courtship and love than 'Urwa.

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tradition." Khairallah, 64.

<sup>68</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 8: 141.

### Multiple Majnūns

Another form of male-male bond between poets is expressed in the narratives about multiple Majnūns competing for the love of Laylā. These narratives also are of two types: first, narratives that allude to the existence of a kind of poetic vogue or fad in which numerous poets took on the nickname of Majnūn and second, narratives depicting a love triangle in which one Majnūn's madness is attributed to his hearing verses about Laylā being recited by another Majnūn.

The phenomenon of multiple Majnūns is conveyed by a number of units. In one such narrative, a tribesman of the Banū 'Amir, when asked about Majnūn, responds with the question: "About which of them are you asking me? There were [from] among us a group that went by the name 'Majnūn.'" (6) The narrator presses his inquiry, saying he means "the one who loved Laylā"--to which the tribesman retorts that "all were in love with Laylā." The tribesman then quotes verses from the poems of three different Majnūns (plural - *majānīn*). The second type of narratives, depicting love triangles, is exemplified by the following unit:

Mu'ādh ibn Kulayb was crazy and he was in love with Laylā.  
Sharing in this love for her was Muzāhim ibn al-Hārith al-  
'Uqaylī. Muzāhim one day said to the mad one:

*Both of us O Mu'ādh love Laylā, there are traces of her in  
me and in you  
I am your partner in the passion for one whose tormenting  
love has been your destiny and my destiny....*

Indeed when he heard these verses, he became mixed up and  
deranged. (7)

As mentioned before, the invocation of bonds with other 'Udhri poets, whether by Majnūn or by others on behalf of Majnūn, as well as the phenomena of multiple Majnūns and the love triangles, suggest rivalry as well as fellowship. In the aforementioned quotations, Majnūn's rivalry is apparent in his declarations of superiority to both Qays ibn Dharīh and 'Urwa. Likewise, in the love triangles involving two Majnūns, both are competing for the love of Laylā. Yet, as Peter Erickson explains, these forms of rivalry are just another form of male bonding:

Even combat with other men is more comforting and secure than dealing with women. The contrast between male friendship and male rivalry is not absolute and the concept of male bonding encompasses them both. Aggressive relationships are a special case of male bonding because of an intimate involvement with the rival that can have a mirroring effect...<sup>69</sup>

Among this male community of poets, immortality is achieved through poetry about females. More importantly, it is achieved through loss of the females. Majnūn is brought into being as a poet only because he loses Laylā. If she exists at all, it is only as a poetic muse and a signifier. The woman semiotically exists only through an exchange of rhetoric between male poets. More generally, the male-female relation, that is, the relation between Laylā and Majnūn, is determined only in the context of other male-male relations, be they between poets or between patriarchs or between patriarchs and poets. The lover-poets of the 'Udhri romances especially are known through speech about their beloveds, in other words, through verbal devirgination of their women. For these poets, a woman's semiotic value

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<sup>69</sup>Peter Erickson, Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985) 2.

resides in her secrecy or her chastity—inviting transgression and revelation through language. Among this male community of poets, immortality is achieved through this transgressive poetry about females. Only through an exchange of rhetoric between male poets does the female semiotically exist. The heterosexual relation between the beloved and lover is both defined and delimited by the context of this 'Udhri homosocial bond.

### Laylā: Site, Agent, and Victim of Tragic Conflict

Idealization of the female, in Majnūn Laylā, verges on deification. Woman, enthroned on a pedestal, acquires supreme value such that she can bestow life or kill. Desire for her becomes a kind of self-effacement, a flight from corporeality. As Frye points out, "the women in the passion-tragedies have all the...characteristics of someone whom it is death to love."<sup>70</sup> One finds a great deal of symbolism depicting Laylā as a killer and slayer in the romance:

*[Alas] you left me to die...then I do die  
There is no survival for frightened souls. (44)*

*I yearned for Laylā to return but  
all that yearnings and desires do is cut mens' heads off. (34)*

*The memory of her has worn away the flesh and then my bones,  
like a chisel which carves a piece of wood to make an arrow.  
(67)*

*A friend she is to us save that she believes that  
my love has made it lawful for her to slay me. (86)*

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<sup>70</sup>Frye, Fools, 49.

In fact, the more she 'kills,' the more the lover desires her and the more noble a lover he considers himself. Vadet has discussed the "conventions auxquelles un poète doit se conformer pour être promu à titre posthume, grâce à l'*adab*, au rang de héros de roman," including the convention whereby "plus cet objet leur est refusé...plus ils lui trouvent de douceur."<sup>71</sup>

Such valorization of the female as Beloved, as already argued, functions to resist and challenge a social hierarchy that privileges the authority of senior and/or propertied males over younger ones, especially in exchange rituals such as marriage. By symbolically tapping a female domain, Majnūn's rhetoric replaces a marginalization of the female by an idealization of the female.

Hence Majnūn is symbolically aligned with the female, with Laylā, in the romance. However, in any patriarchal model of society, the marginalized female domain paradoxically expresses resistance as well as compliance. Females as wives and mothers of male heirs function to uphold the very traditions and practices that marginalize them. In this sense, Laylā's character is set in opposition to that of Majnūn's: she as a virgin female is the very conserver of values that Majnūn has almost flagrantly transgressed.

Frye notes that the "central female figure of a tragic action will often polarize the tragic conflict [e.g. Eve, Helen]."<sup>72</sup> Laylā's character polarizes the conflict in multiple ways in the romance. She is at once the domain,

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<sup>71</sup>Vadet, *L'Esprit courtois*, 358-359.

<sup>72</sup>Frye, *Fools*, 67.

agent and victim of the tragic conflict. First, as just shown, she is the female domain which is both symbolically aligned with and juxtaposed against Majnūn. She is the site where his passion, in the form of rhetoric about love relations with a woman, conflicts with Laylā's father's honor and social values. Publicizing his intimacy with her is publicizing his claim over her, a claim that interferes with and threatens the claim her father has over her. She is the domain upon which the conflict or feud between the two men, her father and Majnūn, is inscribed.

As an agent of conflict, she herself ultimately expresses allegiance to the norms that Majnūn flaunts--the norms of her father. For example, she upholds the dichotomy of public versus private that Majnūn transgresses through his indiscretion. This dichotomy and its relationship to the expression of intimacy is seen in a set of verses frequently attributed to her.

The verses are linked with a narrative that involves Majnūn visiting her in the early stages of their relationship. During this visit, Laylā engages him in conversation but at some point, she is shown as suddenly and urgently wanting to know whether he feels for her what she feels for him. Thus, according to the narrative, she begins to ignore him and converse with others "hour after hour" and when a young man from the neighborhood approaches the scene, "she invited him [near to her] and whispered to him a long secret. (13-14) Meanwhile, "there was in his heart love for her like that of hers for him and she desired him and he found her beautiful,"--a sign of the mutuality of their feelings. But after whispering "a long secret" to the young man from the neighborhood, she turns to Majnūn and gazes at his face: "his color changed due to anxiety and hurt and her

action pained him." Upon witnessing this reaction, she recites a couplet. In her verses and in her conduct (as depicted in the narrative), Laylā underscores the distinction that ought (according to her) to be publicly maintained by them: the distinction between what they feel and what they reveal. They must appear hostile even while inwardly, they desire each other. Paradoxically, she is depicted as inciting his jealousy by rendering herself a site for male desires other than those of Majnūn. After witnessing these feelings of jealousy and pain wrought on his face due to this action, she hastens to console him by declaring, among other things, that she actually loves him more than he loves her. Frye's observation that love of woman in passion-tragedies is emasculating because "she is a snare to men and destroys their masculinity..."<sup>73</sup> is applicable to contexts such as this one, in which Majnūn's desire for Laylā is being rivaled by that of another man. He appears emasculated because Laylā deliberately provokes his jealousy by flirting with this rival male. Not surprisingly, it is in contexts like this one and the previously discussed love triangles involving competing Majnūns, that his agitation often takes the form of swoons, tearful bouts, and loss of reason.

Laylā is also a victim of the conflict. Unlike Majnūn, who is caught between propriety and passion primarily because he has, in a sense, chosen to transgress established social norms, Laylā appears to be trapped between these norms and her feelings for Majnūn through no fault of her own. She has no voice in silencing, or even rebuking, a man who has rendered her a public disgrace. She has no voice in legitimately disputing the slurs on her

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

virginity occasioned by his indiscretion. She is the female space that has been tread upon by the trafficking of his verses and has been made impure, has been impugned.

For Laylā, allegiance to honor means forsaking love. This is a major contradiction that characterizes her position and her identity. She is torn between her love for Majnūn and society. And she is victimized by both this society and the man she loves. In a narrative in which she blames herself as the cause of Majnūn's misfortune, she makes ideological 'sense' of this contradiction by concurring with a pervasive patriarchal myth of the female as the source of male setbacks and defeats (e.g., Adam's downfall attributed to Eve in the creation myth, Yūsuf's tribulations due to deceit of Zulaykha).<sup>74</sup>

Then she wept until she fainted. When she recovered I asked her, 'Who are you, O handmaiden of Allah?' She answered, 'I am Laylā, the woman who brought doom to him, she who brought him no comfort.' Never did I see sorrow and affliction equal to that of hers for Majnūn. (87)

Her infatuation with Majnūn is quite clearly revealed in several narratives and verses. According to one of the variants regarding how they met, she falls in love with him before he does with her. The narrative states that Majnūn sets out one morning and comes upon Laylā sitting in the courtyard of her house and suddenly, upon seeing him [for the second time], "love for him cleaved to her heart and she had fallen in love with him." In another narrative, she is described as making great effort to please him upon their first meeting each other. The unit relates:

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<sup>74</sup>Dollimore, Radical Tragedy, 48.



...he went to [visit] her and he greeted her and she returned the greeting. She went out of her way to be courteous to him and inquire after him. He sat with her and she conversed with him and he with her and so it increased. Each of the two took an interest and was pleased with the other. This did not cease until evening. (44-45)

This attachment to him makes it all the more difficult for her to cope with the anguish and pain she feels as a result of his indiscretion and the scandal it caused. The intensity of her emotional reaction to his misconduct is evident in her encounter with Qays ibn Dharih. After her outburst regarding Majnūn's verses, Qays tries to mitigate her distress by pointing out that no harm was intended by Majnūn and that people were merely twisting and distorting his words. Then, according to the narrative,

She bowed her head for a long time and her tears were falling even while she was trying to hold them back. She wept...and then said: 'Convey my greetings to my paternal cousin and tell him ...By God, my passion for you surpasses what you may find but I have no recourse, no way to you.' (94)

The discontinuity of character suggested by her aforementioned multiple roles and functions in the romance induces us to consider how the tragic functions ideologically through her character. Jonathan Dollimore notes with regard to Jacobean tragedy that "one effect of the notorious discontinuity of 'character' in [it] is to make it virtually impossible to telescope the implications of all this back into the individual, thereby seeing it as ultimately a question of his or her moral culpability."<sup>75</sup> Likewise, the

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 47.

many ambiguities and discontinuities revealed in Laylā's character and role partly must be seen in terms of an "insecurity endemic to her position as a woman in a...male dominated society."<sup>76</sup> It is this insecurity which gives rise to conflicts in allegiance that her character experiences. As Dollimore points out regarding Troilus and Cressida: "the discontinuity in Cressida's identity stems not from her nature but from her position in the patriarchal order."<sup>77</sup> Again, what Dollimore notes below with regard to Cressida is also relevant to Laylā's position:

The conflicting estimates of Cressida's actual worth indicate what is so frequently the case: the position of the subordinate becomes contradictory when there occurs a power struggle in the dominant. Identity is a function of position, and position of power; to be the object of power is also to be in part its effect.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

### Chapter 3: The Tragic and Social Conflict

The establishment of Islam in the seventh-century situated the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula in a historical transition. Bedouin tribes faced the breakdown and dislocation of their ancient, nomadic, pagan culture while experiencing the problems of acclimation to a settled, urban, Islamic civilization. Though there were continuities between pre-Islamic society and that of early Islam, the numerous, important changes inaugurated by the establishment of the new religion cannot be overemphasized.

...the coming of Islam was...an explosion. In the course of a few decades the Arabs exchanged their ancestral paganism for monotheism, the desert for a habitation in the settled Middle East, tribal innocence for state structures, poverty for massive wealth, and undisturbed provinciality for exposure to the world's polemical attention.<sup>1</sup>

A little more than fifty years after the death of the prophet Muḥammad in 632 a.d., during the Umayyad period, Arabic literature was already heralding these changes. Existing genres such as the pre-Islamic ode were being modified and 'new' genres were in formation. Some scholars attribute the origin of the Majnūn Laylā story and poetry to this period of critical transition and transformation (during the Umayyad age in the late seventh and early eighth centuries) when the new subgenres of 'Umarī and 'Udhri love poetry came into vogue.

Positing such a provenance, in this chapter, I try to understand how

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<sup>1</sup>Patricia Crone, Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 5.

context and text interface in the creation of the tragic in the romance. In the previous chapter, I argued that tragedy constructs conflict as fundamentally being between society and the individual. In this chapter, I maintain that tragedy also may construct conflict as being between two different kinds of social orders. In other words, the tragic may also arise from change and conflict experienced by a society in transition.

I argue that the tragic in the Majnūn Laylā romance can be located in the social conflict between the old Bedouin order and the new Islamic Weltanschauung. It is a tragic work primarily from the perspective of "the old order in the final stages of decay," the order that experienced the loss arising from conflict, and not from the vantage point of the "new emergent order." In discussing the "sacrificial crisis" and aspects of Greek tragedy, René Girard notes that "we always view the 'tragic flaw' from the perspective of the new, emergent order; never from that of the old order in the final stages of decay."<sup>2</sup> What renders the conflict in Majnūn Laylā tragic is the experience of a sense of loss, or more accurately perhaps, a sentimentalization of this loss, that is attributable to the Bedouins as a consequence of the weakening and effacement of their ancient way of life. The conflict between things Bedouin and things Islamic that underlies this loss is multi-faceted. The romance also depicts for us how this conflict involved a kind of subversion of Islamic values, on the part of the Bedouins, as an expression of opposition to the new order. The conflict can be identified and characterized in a number of ways: nomadic vs. settled

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<sup>2</sup>Girard argues that the reason for this is that "modern thought" is unable to understand the significance of "the practice of sacrifice." René Girard, Violence and the Sacred, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972) 43.

tribes, northern vs. southern tribes, Bedouin tribes vs. Islamic elites, pastoral vs. urban milieus, 'wild' vs. 'tame,' pagan vs. scriptural ideologies, decentralized tribes vs. incipient state. Each of these polarities is assimilable with the others to one degree or another. In this chapter, I delineate the social conflict by considering each and all of these polarities through reliance on the text of the story as well as on external historical data.

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### The 'Āmir vs. the Prophet

An age-old tension between nomadic and settled tribes in the Arabian peninsula is an important aspect of the social conflict inscribed in the Majnūn Laylā romance. After the rise of Islam, this tension becomes assimilable to conflicts between Bedouins and the new Muslim elites. The existence of antipathy between the nomadic tribes and the prophet, at least as a recurrent trope in the chronicles, is fairly well-documented. Evidence external to our text indicates that the nomadic tribes were not very welcome in the new religious order. Fred Donner summarizes the power configurations of the incipient Islamic state thus:

...the simultaneous rise of the Islamic state and of a ruling elite within the Islamic state represented the emergence of three kinds of domination. First, it marked the hegemony of Muslims over non-Muslims; second, the dominance of an essentially Hījāzī ruling elite over other tribal groups; and third, it marked *the hegemony of a sophisticated sedentary elite and their state over nomadic groups.*<sup>3</sup>  
[italics mine]

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<sup>3</sup>Fred Donner, The Early Islamic Conquests (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) 81.

In the romance of Majnūn Laylā, from the various genealogies invoked for Majnūn, what is common is the affiliation with the nomadic tribal clan of the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a.<sup>4</sup> Historically, this clan included the tribes of Ka'b, Kilāb and the Numayr. Among the sub-tribes listed as being part of the Ka'b are the Ja'da, al-Ḥarīsh and 'Uqayl. Majnūn is most often identified as being a member of the Ja'da whereas, Laylā is consistently described as being from al-Ḥarīsh.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Majnūn's name, if viewed as a poetic fad, was also adopted by members of the 'Uqayl and the Numayr, both tribes of the clan of 'Āmir.<sup>6</sup>

The 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a, an important nomadic tribe, was a branch of the great confederation called Hawāzin, linked with the Qaysites or northern tribes.<sup>7</sup> According to certain historical narratives, the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a set itself in opposition to the prophet by unsuccessfully trying to negotiate for itself a position of power in the emerging Islamic political system in return for pledging allegiance to him. The following account relays a very interesting and revealing dialogue between the prophet and a chieftain of this tribe on this matter:

When he offered his message to the Banu 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a, their leader Bayhara b. Firas replied: 'If we are to pay homage to you and

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<sup>4</sup>Interestingly, the nomadic traits (and a disparagement of these traits) of the tribe of Ṣa'sa'a are incised in the tribal name itself--*sa'sa'a* is a word that means 'scattered, dispersed, lowly people.'

<sup>5</sup> Only in one anecdotal unit quoted in both (Aghānī and Kitāb al-Shi'r) sources is Majnūn mentioned as being affiliated with al-Ḥarīsh: see Aghānī pg. 85.

<sup>6</sup>Encyclopedia of Islam, New Ed., s.v. 'Āmir.

<sup>7</sup>Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat Ansāb al-'Arab, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Ḥārūn (Dār al-Ma'ārif bi-Miṣr, 1962) 271-272; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamharat al-Nasab ed. Nājī Ḥasan (Bayrūt: Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-'Arabiyyah, 1986) 317.

you defeat your enemies will we come to power after you?'...And when Muḥammad referred him in this matter of power to Allah's will, who grants or withholds power as He sees fit, he was displeased and said: 'Are our necks to be a target then to the Arabs for your sake? And if you win others are to rule? We have no use for such an arrangement.'<sup>8</sup>

A variant of this account provides an even more effective picture of the conflict of interest between the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a and the prophet. In the following historical narrative, the tribe's chief, who is also a famous poet, is actually portrayed as trying to persuade Muḥammad to share power with him:

When the nomadic B. 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a sent a delegation to Muḥammad, their chief (the famous poet 'Āmir b. al-Tufayl) asked the Prophet what he would give him if he embraced Islam. The Prophet replied that if he became a Muslim, he would have the same rights and duties as any other Muslim. 'Āmir pressed the Prophet with "Won't you give me authority after you?" to which Muḥammad responded, "That is not for you nor for your tribe." 'Āmir then asked the Prophet to let him be in command of the nomadic peoples, with Muḥammad in command of the settled peoples, an offer that Muḥammad similarly refused.<sup>9</sup>

Several factors may be deduced from these accounts. First, that the 'Āmir's chieftain is depicted trying to broker a power arrangement in which he and

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<sup>8</sup>Ignaz Goldziher, Muslim Studies, ed. S. M. Stern, trans. from German by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, 2 vols. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968-1971) 17.

<sup>9</sup>Donner, Conquests, 81. Charles Lyall's introduction to his edition of the *Diwān* of 'Āmir b. al-Tufayl reviews at length the accounts of hostilities between this poet and chief of the tribe, on the one hand, and the prophet, on the other hand.

the prophet are co-rulers and that he requests Muḥammad to designate him as the leader of the whole of the nomadic clans are very important indications of the 'Āmir's power. He is shown viewing his status in terms close to parity with that of Muḥammad. Second, the accounts reveal that either because of or despite the 'Āmir's great power as a nomadic tribe, Muḥammad was unwilling to concede them a significant share in the emerging Islamic political order. Third, the 'Āmir (not unlike many other nomadic tribal clans) approached conversion to Islam as a matter of political expediency. This last also partly sheds light on why the 'Āmir were unsuccessful in their bid for power, that is, why the prophet refused to grant them much power.

This reluctance on Muḥammad's part to grant the B. 'Āmir too much authority because they were the wrong tribe (i.e., a nomadic tribe?) is quite striking when contrasted with the relatively free access to positions of authority enjoyed by the Quraysh, the Thaqīf, and the Medinese *Anṣār*.<sup>10</sup>

The latter three tribal groupings were also the ones to continue to enjoy positions of influence well after the prophet's death. Patricia Crone has written that the offices of the provincial governors, during the Umayyad period, "were entrusted to a kinsman of the caliph, be he agnatic or cognatic or affinal, or to members of a small tribe closely related to his, such as Quraysh, Thaqīf or the Anṣār."<sup>11</sup>

The extent to which the prophet wanted to efface, in a sense, the nomadic existence of the Bedouins is evident from Fred Donner's assertion

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Crone, *Slaves*, 32.



that "there seems to have been, at least at an early stage in [his] career, a definite policy of requiring Muslims to be - or to become - settled people."<sup>12</sup> Towards the end of Muḥammad's life, the new Islamic community was composed of both settled peoples and numerous nomadic groups, since his policy had become very difficult to enforce as the number of converts from nomadic groups increased. Yet, "the nomadic groups remained virtual subjects of the Islamic ruling elite composed of sedentary peoples; though Muslims, they remained essentially outside the circles of influence in Medina."<sup>13</sup>

### Majnūn as an Anti-Type of the Prophet

Given the political disenfranchisement of most of the northern tribes (who were nomadic) in the emerging power system after Islam, especially the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a's tensions with Muḥammad, could it be argued that the character of Majnūn in the romance functions as an anti-type of the figure of the Prophet? With regard to Majnūn, A. Khairallah has noted that

It is highly remarkable that Islam had to generate (or at least adopt and variate on) this particular type of hero as the poet's best persona for asserting his right to exist along with the Prophet.<sup>14</sup>

It should also be mentioned that the prophet Muḥammad, like Majnūn, was a tribal member of the northern confederation.<sup>15</sup> But in the polemics

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<sup>12</sup>Donner, Conquests, 80.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry, 4.

<sup>15</sup>Conflicts between the northern and southern Arabian tribes were played out in the literary context. The 'Udhri corpus of love poetry and tales (including Majnūn Laylā) refers to this tribal rivalry. The Quraysh (or

between the Meccans and Ansār, the latter reinvented the prophet as their own and hence, as being southern and Yemenī.<sup>16</sup> Could this be another reason for speculating that the principal character of the Majnūn Laylā romance functions as a type of foil to the figure of the prophet? Perhaps the figure of Majnūn was more a literary rejoinder by the northern tribes to the southerners' (i.e., Ansār's or Yemenī's) promotion of the prophet rather than to their promotion of the 'Udhri poet, Jamīl.<sup>17</sup>

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Meccans), the tribe of the prophet, belonged to Mudar, i.e., a northern Arabian tribe, while the Ansār, comprising the tribes of 'Aus and Khazraj, belonged to Qahtan, i.e., a southern Arabian tribe. Muḥammad tried to create fraternal bonds between these two communities, but later history showed these attempts to be unsuccessful.

<sup>16</sup>As I have pointed out, the Islamic conquests brought many material benefits to the nomadic clans (e.g., booty, military stipends, etc.) but they were denied positions of power by the sedentary ruling elites (i.e., by the Quraysh, the Medinans or Ansār, and the Thaqīf). Most of the nomadic clans were mainly the northern tribes—the tribe of Muḥammad, the Quraysh was also a northern tribe but not nomadic. Thus, Muḥammad, through his policies against the nomads positioned himself against his own larger tribal confederation. The Quraysh, itself Muḥammad's deadliest foe in his initial conversion measures, acquired power within the new Islamic polity only after expressing allegiance to the prophet. Significantly, the Quraysh, after acquiring this power, followed Muḥammad's policy of keeping its own northern tribal affiliates at bay and instead curried favour with the southern clans. See Goldziher, Muslim Studies, 90-91. The Ansār or southerners welcomed Muḥammad to their town and appointed him as an arbitrator in their tribal disputes. They later exploited the Meccan's initial disavowal of Muḥammad to pronounce him as their own and thereby to style themselves as more Islamic than the northerners. It seems that during the early Islamic era, the 'northern versus southern tribes' conflict acquired connotations whereby north came to be seen as less allied with Islam (and with the prophet) than the south, and the south, moreover, identified itself as the true friends of the prophet.

<sup>17</sup>The 'Udhri fad was launched by the southern tribes through their famous poet Jamīl whose beloved was Buthaynah. Majnūn Laylā was generated by the northern tribes in a fierce competition over which of the tribal clans "could produce the saddest, most lovelorn of poet-lovers." Dols observes

There are several important ways in which Majnūn's character functions as a foil to that of the Prophet. As a poet, he functions as a foil. For Majnūn, poetry (and Laylā as a poetic muse) is privileged to the exclusion of all else. Moreover, for Majnūn, poetry about Laylā has the salvatory power of Qur'ānic verses. His poetry thus is a kind of an anti-text to the Qur'ān. In fact, Dols compares the texture of the romance to the *sunna* or exempla and sayings of the prophet.

The amber-like preservation of the story's fragments in the form of hadith, like the sayings of the Prophet, and the unwillingness to create a coherent narrative of *Majnūn Laylā* in Arabic appear to reinforce the view that the legend was intended to enshrine a pristine past, comparable to the *sunna* of the Prophet.<sup>18</sup>

However, just as importantly, several traits also link the poet and the prophet in fundamental ways. Both poet and prophet consider themselves inspired beings and both face antagonism due to their inspired speech, i.e., their verses. In other words, it is acts of discourse that result in the social castigation of both. Both are accused of being mad poets. The prophet, Muḥammad, before his verses were recognized as being divinely inspired speech, was regarded by the hostile Meccans as a mad poet. Both are called *majnūn*, that is, one possessed by *jinn*.

Furthermore, the primary transgression behind these acts of prohibited speech is violation of the 'way of the forefathers.' Just as Majnūn is pitted against the 'fathers' in his deification of the beloved,

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that the northern tribes, represented by the 'Āmir "may have created the even more famous poet, Qays ibn al-Mulawwah or Majnūn, as a member of their tribe, who was even more more unhappy than Jamīl in his love affair." Dols, *Majnūn: The Madman*, 322.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 332.

likewise Muḥammad too was accused of departing from the way of his ancestors by proclaiming Islam. Both prophet and poet are ostracized in their communities for these transgressions. Yet, both also voluntarily withdraw from the social group that isolates them.

### Pastoralism and the Tragic

I would point to the pastoralism of Majnūn Laylā as an important element in the inscription of conflict between things Bedouin and things Islamic.<sup>19</sup> This pastoral element is a distinct generic feature of the story. Here I would like to digress somewhat and address how the pastoral as generic mode functions in this romance.<sup>20</sup>

#### I. Pastoral or Anti-Pastoral?

Undoubtedly, there exists a kaleidoscopic use of generic features in this story: generic modes of romance, tragedy, and the pastoral are closely interwoven. Pastoral romance is a form which, very simply put, is

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<sup>19</sup>In her review of As 'ad Khairallah's work on Majnūn, Julie Meisami briefly refers to "the cultural primitivism generated by nostalgia for desert life which was an important formative factor in 'Abbasid literature..." I would argue that this pastoralization of the romance is also related to these strains of 'cultural primitivism' as found in 'Abbāsid literary sources. Julie Meisami, review of Love, Madness, and Poetry: An Interpretation of the Majnūn Legend, by As'ad E. Khairallah, Edebiyāt, vol. 4, no. 2 (1979): 277-286.

<sup>20</sup>J. Stetkevych, in his study of the pastoral in early Arabic poetry, does not identify the distinctions (e.g., pastoral vs. 'anti-pastoral') that I proceed to make in this digression. Jaroslav Stetkevych, The Zephyrs of Najd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1993).

characterized by an evocation of an idyllic past in which 'the domestic lives and loves of shepherds play a prominent part.' Northrop Frye has mentioned how the pastoral, the Arcadia, depicts "the simplified life of a handful of shepherds who are also lovers and poets."<sup>21</sup> The pastoral romance constructs the past as a plenitude in contrast to some perceived lack in the present. For example, Theocritus wrote his pastorals while he was at Ptolemy's court of Alexandria, when he most longed for and remembered the "actual herdsmen of his boyhood and the beautiful countryside of Sicily."<sup>22</sup> However, in Majnūn Laylā, the past is not always envisioned as a plenitude. At times, the past both contrasts with and mirrors the lack or loss in the present. In other words, the Bedouin/urbanite poets of early Umayyad times, who invented and popularized this romance, hark back to the past but their evocation of it often mirrors their sense of loss in the present. Hence, it may be argued that the pastoral element in Majnūn Laylā is a kind of counterstatement, a kind of antithesis to the conventional pastoral--a kind of anti-pastoral.<sup>23</sup>

The element of the idyllic, as noted in the previous chapter, is common to romance in general. Whereas in the pastoral romance, an evocation of an idyllic past is linked to the permanently happy, blissful lives of simple shepherds and shepherdesses, it could be said that in what may be

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<sup>21</sup>Frye, Romance, 149.

<sup>22</sup>Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, Enl. Ed., s.v. "pastoral."

<sup>23</sup>One wonders if this 'anti-pastoralism' (i.e., antithesis to the pastoral) of Majnūn Laylā bears any relation to the urbanism of the maqamāt genre (a kind of 'early picaresque') in Arabic literature. A. Fowler has discussed how the picaresque functioned as a counterstatement, as an antigenre, to romance. Alastair Fowler, Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

coined 'the anti-pastoral,' the evocation of an idyllic past is fleeting, and the short-lived happy experiences of 'simple shepherds' are transformed into the unhappy, unsocial, experiences of 'wild men.' If the character-type associated with the pastoral is the 'simple shepherd,' the character-type connected with the anti-pastoral is the anti-shepherd or the 'wild man.'

What is important in the anti-pastoral is that the evocation of a blissful, bucolic past is rapidly eclipsed by a time or state (also in the past) characterized by unhappiness, separation, wildness and loss. The idyllic landscape is permanently replaced by a desolate terrain, just as in tragic romance the idyllic descends into the 'nightmarish' without a return to it. In fact, the oppositions between pastoral and anti-pastoral are similar to those between the comic and tragic in romance. I would argue that the anti-pastoralism of Majnūn Laylā can be conflated with its tragic elements. The anti-pastoral in a tragic romance is a type of symbolic inversion of the pastoralism of comic romance.

This explication of the anti-pastoral in Majnūn Laylā partly hinges on the dual roles of Majnūn as both poet and character in the poetic romance. This duality also holds true regarding its pastoralism. As an invention to express and mirror the nostalgia of the Bedouins, his character functions as the Bedouin poet experiencing this nostalgia and therefore producing pastoral-like poetry. However he is also the desert nomad character in the anti-pastoral story collectively authored by Bedouin tribes and Hijāzī urbanites. A. Khairallah has discussed this aspect with regard to his madness: he is the only lover-poet among the 'Udhri poets who produces poetry foregrounding *folie d'amour* and himself incarnates his poetic

madness. That is, he incarnates the very trope that his poetry foregrounds.

Now we return once again to the issue of how the conflict between things Bedouin and Islamic is inscribed in the romance—a conflict which, it must be remembered, is an aspect of the tragic in the romance.

## II. Majnun as the Bedouin Wild Man

In his book, Mythology of the Wild Man, Richard Bernheimer states that the term 'wildness' and 'wild man'

...implied everything that eluded Christian norms and the established framework of Christian society, referring to what was uncanny, unruly, raw, unpredictable, foreign, uncultured, and uncultivated...Just as the wilderness is the background against which medieval society is delineated, so wildness in the widest sense is the background of God's lucid order of creation.<sup>24</sup>

Likewise, I would argue, the concept of 'wildness,' in the Majnūn Laylā romance, mainly functions as a foil against which all the norms associated with the nascent Islamic state are etched and legitimated.<sup>25</sup> Yet, 'wildness' functions both as a means to marginalize the character who resists these norms as well as a means to rebel against these same norms. The character

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<sup>24</sup>Richard Bernheimer, Wild Man in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952) 19-20.

<sup>25</sup>Julie Meisami, in her review of As'ad Khairallah's work, observes how the 'wild man' aspect of this romance "recalls 'wild men' of the medieval European tradition, particularly figures like Lancelot..." Meisami, review of Love, Madness, and Poetry: An Interpretation of the Majnūn Legend, 283.

of Majnūn as a wild man embodies the clash between two opposing social orders—Bedouin and Islamic. There are resonances between the wild man character of the pre-Islamic brigand-poet (*su'lūk*) and that of Majnūn. In fact, Ben-Chehida has remarked that in the pre-Islamic period, the tragic manifested itself in two forms: in *Sa'ālūk* poetry and “under the guise of madjnun.”<sup>26</sup>

Ce mode d'expression dramatique s'est manifesté à l'époque pré-islamique sous deux aspects:

(a) sous l'aspect du “majnoun,” le fou ou “possédé par les djinns” est en fait l'amoureux éperdu, considéré comme “différent,” autre que le groupe d'appartenance, il n'est ni frappé d'ostracisme ni celui qui a perdu *la raison*.

Par l'association mnémorique du nom des amoureux célèbres comme Kaïs et Leïla, Kothair-Azza, la littérature arabo-musulmane a consacré la tragédie destinée d'individus ayant choisi de s'exclure délibérément de l'activité socio-politique du “ghenos” en rompant le lien avec la tribu pour devenir “fou.” A côté des “majnoun” nous voyons apparaître les poètes “uthri” représentant l'amour impossible et fondamentalement chaste.

(b) Et c'est avec les premiers poètes dissidents nommés les “saalik” que s'annonce un courant d'indépendance et d'égalité...La tragique marginalisation des “poètes brigands” est compensée par la recherche désespérée d'un idéal de justice et de liberté.”<sup>27</sup>

Ben-Chehida suggests that it is the rupture in tribal bonds, the separation from the social group, that imparts a tragic quality to both *Sa'ālūk* poetry and the stories of famous lovers like Majnūn and Laylā, Kuthayyir and

<sup>26</sup>A. Ben Chehida, “La Destinée De La Tragédie Dans La Culture Islamique,” in *The Existential Coordinates of the Human Condition: Epic, Tragic, etc.*, ed. by A Tymieniecka, vol. XVIII, (D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1984) 334.

<sup>27</sup>Tbid.



‘Azzah. The presence of sacrificial imagery in both *Ṣa‘ālīk* poetry and the ‘Udhri romances further attests to their tragic dimensions. Yet whereas wildness in our romance largely is set against Islamic norms, in *sa‘ālīk* poetry, it opposes tribal aggregate norms, as Suzanne Stetkevych has demonstrated. Stetkevych has talked about how the relation of the *su‘lūk* (brigand) poem to the classical *qasīdah* is synecdochic—that of the part to the whole—and dialectical, that is the liminal phase in the *su‘lūk* poem is diametrically opposed to reaggregation in the *qasīdah*. According to the paradigm she employs:

...the burden of *su‘lūk* poetry should consist of those images of night, violence, danger, hunger and thirst, wild beasts and loneliness that characterize or symbolize ritual liminality. We should note too that these bear an antithetical relation to the values espoused in tribal *fakhr*: ease, abundance, satiety, communal eating and drinking, the protection and propagation of the tribe. Further more it is precisely the *su‘lūk*’s acceptance of this permanent contact with danger...that confers upon him a “heroic” dimension, but this is not to be confused with the heroism of the aggregate tribal male.<sup>28</sup>

Before delving into a discussion of how the poet is an embodiment of the clash between things Bedouin and Islamic, it is worth noting that the rather detailed depiction of Majnūn as a wild man in the tenth-century

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<sup>28</sup>S. Stetkevych, *Mute*, 89. It could be argued that the ‘Udhri poet’s contravention of social rituals, along with his ensuing state of liminality consists of his rite of passage into the community of lover-poets. Likewise, the *sa‘ālīk*’s (brigand-poets’) liminality vis-à-vis society as reflected in their verse, defined and aggregated them as a distinct poetic community. This is an important omission in Stetkevych’s analysis: the brigand-poet’s lack of reintegration into the tribe is what constitutes his integration into the literary community of robber-poets. The state of being a social outcast (being liminal or ritually impure) is what ultimately initiates the brigand or into another community.

Aghānī rendition of the romance may be a prototype for the portrayals of the wild man in medieval European literature.<sup>29</sup> According to Bernheimer, much of the European literary material displaying the wild man character dates from the twelfth-century, although "his great popularity is not witnessed until the late fourteenth-century."<sup>30</sup> It may be speculated that the tenth-century Arabic character of Majnūn is an early precursor to the wild man in medieval European literature. Perhaps the mythology of the wild man that so suffuses Western medieval literature and art, travelled to "the clipped verses of French Arthurian romance, the epics by German minstrel singers, and the writings of Cervantes and Spencer" through an Arabic literary channel.<sup>31</sup> It is interesting that Bernheimer observes "there is a striking resemblance between the amorous conventions of courtly poetry and the mythology of the wild man, the more striking, in fact, since there is no indication of any original connection between the them," when our Arabic romance is replete with precisely these connections between love and wildness.<sup>32</sup>

How Majnūn is constructed as a wild man has been dealt with to varying degrees by Jean-Claude Vadet, André Miquel, As'ad Khairallah, and Michael Dols. A number of these critics have pointed out the anti-

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<sup>29</sup>Is the tenth-century character of Majnūn the first bona fide wild man in Arabic literature? Michael Dols has observed that "the portrayal of Qays, among the animals...[is] unique in Arabic poetry..." Dols, Majnūn: The Mad Man, 337. Dols also notes that, according to al-Naysaburī (d. 406/1016), in his Kitāb 'Uqalā' al-Majānīn, Uways al-Qaranī, an ascetic contemporary of Muḥammad, "was the first in Islam to whom madness was imputed." Ibid., 355.

<sup>30</sup>Bernheimer, Wild Man, 21-22.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 138-139.

Islamic tendencies of Majnūn's characterization as a wild man. Dols declares that "...Qays the savage would appear as the negator of Muslim social values."<sup>33</sup> But, as I will shortly demonstrate, Qays is both negated against and the negator; he is both the sinful wild man and the romanticized, rebellious wild man. Khairallah, somewhat in the same vein as these other critics, has indicated that the romantic quality of this characterization may be perceived as endowing Majnūn with a certain Sufi-like cast:

In the Arabic context-contrary to what is generally believed-the Majnūn theme does not simply express a romantic nostalgia for life in nature, but it also exhibits clear Sufi overtones.<sup>34</sup>

Khairallah also has pointed out that "among the famous love-poets who were heroes of love-romances, Majnūn is the only one depicted as a madman whose total alienation from society leads him to live with the wild animals of the desert."<sup>35</sup> This in itself is significant. Both Miquel and Dols have talked about some of the traits of his *ensauvagement*. Miquel writes:

Traits physiques: ce sont la pilosité accrue, libre, ou les ongles demesurement longs. Traits de comportement aussi: la nourriture faite d'herbe, Majnūn piaffant comme un cheval sauvage a l'approche d'un être humain, et la vie si bien partagée avec les gazelles qu'elles ne le fuient plus.<sup>36</sup>

Dols notes:

In rags and dishevelled, Qays looked like a wild man. His 'wildness

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<sup>33</sup>Dols, Majnūn: The Madman, 335.

<sup>34</sup>Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry, 2.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>36</sup>André Miquel and Percy Kemp, Majnūn et Laylā: l'amour fou (Paris: Éditions Sindbad, 1984) 75.

within' was a reflection of his 'wildness without': his long fingernails, his long and unkempt hair, and the growth of his body hair. Except for brief period when long hair was a mongol fashion in the later Middle Ages, it is an unusual characteristic for Muslim men.<sup>37</sup>

What these critics have failed to pointed out is that this portrayal of Majnūn as 'wild man' lends itself to dual, opposing interpretations—only one of which may be characterized as tragic.

Hayden White observes that there are two different modes of constructing the 'wild man.' The first mode, which White suggests may be traced back to Biblical and Hebraic archetypes, conflates the physical with a moral condition:

...the wild man as the antitype of the *desirable humanity*, as warning of what men would fall into if they definitively rejected society and its norms...<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, the second mode:

...if one saw society, with all its struggle, as a fall away from natural perfection, then he might be inclined to populate that nature with wild men whose function was to serve as anti-types of *social existence*...<sup>39</sup>

Strains of both these models are present in the wild man aspects of Majnūn's character. The conflict between things Bedouin and things Islamic is illustrated in how the classical model constructs the wild man as a kind of return to "natural perfection" ( since "social existence" is equated

<sup>37</sup>Dols, Majnūn: The Mad Man, 334-335.

<sup>38</sup>Hayden White, "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," in Tropics of Discourse, Essays in Cultural Criticism, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1985 ) 173.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

with a “fall away from natural perfection”), and the ethical model views him as “an antitype of desirable humanity.”

As an antitype of the desirable Muslim citizen, Majnūn is portrayed madly renting and stripping his clothes, walking around nude, letting his hair grow long and biting his lips like a mad dog--in other words, he is shown acting as a complete social outcast. He is depicted as being bereft of home, tribe and human society, in general. The poet's state of wildness is attributed to his godlessness--the latter implied through the portrayal of his refusal to pray or submit to Allah during his pilgrimage to Mecca.

As for the other characterization of Majnūn (i.e., the wild man as a return to “natural perfection”), it is evident in the romanticized picture of the poet living outside of society's boundaries but in pastoral harmony with the gazelles. Although he is described as having lost his ‘human-ness,’ the animals that he is associated with are among the most peace-loving of animals: gazelles. He drinks with them when they stop to drink at their watering hole, eats herbage as they do, and runs with them when they flee. They, too, have overcome their fear of him, having become accustomed to him.

The choice of the gazelles as the wild animals with which Majnūn is symbolically aligned is telling. First, because gazelles are generally considered among the most serene of animals, their presence lends a pastoral air to his wildness. Second, the gazelle also acts as a simile for the beloved, and thus its presence further accentuates the romanticism of the narrative. Third, its use as a trope also lends a mythic somewhat supernatural aura to Majnūn's depiction as wild man, since the ancient

Arab poets considered the gazelle to be an animal that especially served the jinn.<sup>40</sup> This tallies with W. Robertson Smith's assertion that wild animals such as the gazelles, because they were considered sacred by ancient Arabs, were immune to being used as sacrificial animals.<sup>41</sup>

Miquel and Kemp have posed the question: why the presence of the gazelles instead of a more savage animal?

Pourquoi les gazelles et rien qu'elles? Le fait est d'autant plus étrange que la bête n'est porteuse ici d'aucune métaphore: si on l'a choisie pour lui associer Majnūn, ce n'est pas parce qu'elle est l'image bien connue de la grâce et de la tendresse; c'est parce qu'elle est sauvage, et rien d'autre....Il aurait pu, à l'occasion, être aussi loup, renard, lion ou tout autre animal de ces espaces...<sup>42</sup>

Contrary to their assertion, the gazelle is the animal of choice precisely because "elle est l'image bien connue de la grâce et de la tendresse." The gazelles are so placed in this narrative precisely because they lend a sentimental, romantic cast to the poet-lover's state of wildness. Frye has written that the presence of domestic and pastoral animals is a trait of romance. The creatures that populate the romance of Majnūn Laylā are highly pastoral: lambs, turtle-doves, gazelles. The presence of the few non-pastoral creatures (e.g., wolf, crows) is an aspect of the sacrificial imagery that characterizes the story and will be discussed in another chapter.

As Dols has pointed out, the depiction of Majnūn within this space of

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<sup>40</sup>Vadet, L'esprit courtois, 373.

<sup>41</sup>"...a thing that is taboo is one that has supernatural qualities...of a kind that forbid it to be used for common purposes...such an animal as the Arabs would have allowed to go free instead of killing it." W. Robertson Smith, Religion of the Semites, 463.

<sup>42</sup>Miquel and Kemp, L'amour fou, 74.

wilderness, living harmoniously with the wild gazelles, subverts the traditional religious conception of man's place in the natural world. In Dols' words, "Majnūn's animal kingdom was an inversion of the normal Muslim perception of nature."<sup>43</sup> The landscape described, rather than being hostile to him, is welcoming and accepting of him as he is of it; it is only hostile space from the viewpoint of the Muslim town dweller.<sup>44</sup>

The importance of tropes of madness in the construction of Majnūn's wild man persona has to be considered. The role of madness is, of course, symbolically ambivalent and lends itself to the two divergent models cited earlier.<sup>45</sup> On the one hand, as already suggested, a distinctly Islamic subtext imputes madness to Majnūn's character as a consequence of his deviation from religious and social norms. Madness, therefore, is described as the punishment for having sinned. On the other hand, madness is also romanticized. As an aspect of the wild man's rebelliousness, madness becomes a badge of Majnūn's non-conformity. Examples of madness functioning as a strategy of resistance abound in Islamic society, not just in

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<sup>43</sup>Dols, *Majnūn: The Mad Man*, 337.

<sup>44</sup> As Dols observes, "traditional Islamic thought considers the natural world a domain within which the human reigns and a space which he exploits for his own needs." Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Dols has raised the issue of "Whether [Majnūn's] indiscretion was the cause or consequence of his mental disturbance... If Qays' erotic monomania were a sign of an incipient mental disturbance, his madness gains greater significance in relation to his love and its poetic expression, but it robs the story of much of its romantic impulse. The customary view is that his madness was a consequence of his ardent love." Ibid., 332. The manuals on love, such as *Tawq al-Hamāmah* by Ibn Ḥazm, suggest that *mahabbat al-'ishq al-saḥīḥ* or "true love" is susceptible to a form of madness. Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī, *Tawq al-Hamāmah*, ed. al-Tāhir Aḥmad Makkī (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1975) 22. This corroborates the likelihood that his madness was a consequence of his passionate love, not his love a consequence of his madness.

the literary realm, but in actual historical and social practices. In his work on madness in medieval Islamic culture, Dols has mentioned several cases in which fits of madness and seizures were invoked by those who sought to escape treatment or measures that they perceived as being unfair and oppressive. For example, he cites the instance of a man who, to prevent the infamous al-Hajjaj from throwing him in prison, feigns insanity.<sup>46</sup> Lila Abu-Lughod, too, has suggested that displays of madness are employed by those lacking power to circumvent authority of one kind or another. She presents the example of the young girl who resists her family's attempts to coerce her into marriage by acting as if she has epileptic seizures.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Majnūn Laylā is a tragic work primarily from the perspective of "the old order in the final stages of decay"—that experienced the loss arising from conflict—and not from that of the "new emergent order."<sup>48</sup> Only the use of the classical archetype, that is, the representation of the Bedouin "wild man as a means of rebellion against established society itself" is tragic. A tragic reading of his wildness sentimentalizes his errors as excuseable and somewhat ennobling. As an example of this model, Majnūn, the wild man, becomes a metaphor for rebellion against the new types of social and religious institutions being heralded by the empire. His obsession with Laylā and with the Najd (to be discussed below) may be considered a means of affirming and celebrating a fading Bedouin, nomadic identity and ethos, unfettered by the constraints of Islam and the caliphate. Hence, Majnūn represents the Bedouin image

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<sup>46</sup>Dols, Majnūn: The Mad Man, 353-354.

<sup>47</sup>Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments, 102.

<sup>48</sup>Girard, Violence and the Sacred, 43.



of the wild man--the madman in the desert, without a name, a genealogy, a home or a history--employed as an icon of rebellion against the 'civilizing mission of Islam.' His geographical errancy or mad wanderings in search of the Najd are sentimentalized as a nostalgic gravitation toward the pristine bedouin homeland.

This quality of his, i.e., his being constructed as a recognizably Bedouin character but without the concreteness of a name, established genealogy, identity, etc., allows us to consider him as the no-man Bedouin representing every Bedouin and all Bedouins. Empson's comment regarding the significance of the pastoral wherein 'much is said about complex peoples through a representation of simple people' is relevant here.<sup>49</sup> Such a reading lends credibility to the interpretation of Majnūn Laylā as a narrative of rebellion, in which a Bedouin subjectivity seeks to challenge the authority of the nascent Islamic empire.

The didactic and non-tragic Hebraic/Islamic subtext presents Majnūn's wildness as a consequence of his willful and blameable departure from social and religious norms. René Girard has observed that "religious thinking puts all differences at the same level; it assimilates family and cultural differences to natural differences. When we are dealing with mythology, therefore, we must make do without any clear distinction between physical monstrosity and moral monstrosity."<sup>50</sup> Not only is Majnūn's physical breakdown conflated with moral transgressions--for example, his bestiality and nudity are framed as bodily signs of a moral

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<sup>49</sup>William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral (Norfolk: James Laughlin, n.d.) 11.

<sup>50</sup> Girard, Violence and the Sacred, 251-252.

decay caused by his disregard for familial and religious conventions--but the moral disfigurement also is conflated with spiritual errors, i.e., the sins of his heart and tongue.

Majnūn's physical wildness is thus constructed as a spiritual and moral trial. This trial is mapped out on the desert wilderness, a wilderness of sin, in which he is damned to roam and wander endlessly. The topos of 'wandering or roaming' (*huyām*), so prominent in the story, is also symbolically ambivalent and lends itself to multiple interpretations: on the one hand, 'wandering' being a quintessentially Bedouin trait, is a symbol of the nomadism and freedom of the Bedouin tribes, and on the other hand, when viewed from the perspective of the town settler, it is a sign of a cultural primitivism associated with the rustic and uncultured Bedouin. Seen through the prism of the later conflict between Bedouin tribes and Islamic elites, 'wandering,' in addition to being linked with a cultural backwardness, also becomes pejoratively associated with a moral straying, a deviation from an Islamic path. Yet, so richly does this motif of geographic wandering resonate within the romance that, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, it also becomes symbolically conflated with other kinds of 'wandering'-- for example, a mental and emotional wandering as experienced by the lover or a wandering of the lover's sexual desire.

### III. Pastoralism and the Poetics of Nostalgia

The anti-pastoral in Majnūn Laylā is a sentimentalization of a loss. As a sentimentalization, it includes elements of both a rustic charm and pathos. The loss is that experienced by nomadic Bedouin tribes in their conflict with and subjugation to the settled, urban Islamic elites. Let us

examine this closely in the following narrative framing a highly pastoral couplet.

Majnūn was in love with Laylā, daughter of Mahdī ibn Sa'd.....'Amir ibn Ṣa'sa'a whose nickname was 'Umm Mālik, when they were children. Each fell in love with the other while they were out tending the flocks of their families. They continued thus until they grew up and then she was veiled from him. And the following saying of his indicates this:

*I fell in love with Laylā when she  
was just a girl with a forelock,  
when the swelling of her breasts had not yet  
been manifested to playmates.  
Two children tending the lambs.  
Would that we never had grown up, nor had  
the lambs grown old. (11)*

Here, regardless of whether we posit Majnūn as pastoral poet (author) or pastoral shepherd (character), the evocation of an idyllic past consisting of an innocent child shepherd and shepherdess blissfully falling in love in a pastoral setting is so fleeting that it is immediately dimmed by the remembrance of love's demise (e.g., "This did not cease when they grew up, and then, she was veiled from him," and "Would that we never had grown up, nor had the lambs grown old."). Hence, unlike the conventional pastoral, we have the evocation of both plenitude and lack in the past to contrast and mirror the sorrowful lack in the present. A nostalgia for Bedouin pastoral origins is clearly present in the evocation of the incipient

love between Majnūn and Laylā. Full of yearning for a prior time, they evoke an age of innocence before the lovers' maturation. The import of Laylā being veiled, i.e., separated from him, once they "grew up" or became sexually mature, is clear. The reference to budding breasts, in the hemistich *when the swelling of her breasts had not yet been manifested to playmates*, signifies the onset of puberty, and underscores the childhood origins of the couple's love. In the love story of Kuthayyir 'Azzah, as well, Kuthayyir falls in love with 'Azzah when she is just a young lass with 'budding breasts.'<sup>51</sup> In the verses, Majnūn laments their maturation given its social impact on their relations. With adulthood, their love has been sacrificed just as the lambs presumably were once they matured.

An absence of change is desired in the verses. A critique of social mores associated with Islam is suggested in the desire for a bygone time and social order. Likewise, a discomfort with the non-pastoral or urban and settled milieus of empire is also conveyed. The pastoral setting and the sentiments being evoked by the verses are somewhat reminiscent of the Adam and Eve story. In discussing some of the pastoral aspects of romance, Northrop Frye has observed that the "closer romance comes to a world of original identity, the more clearly something of the symbolism of the garden of Eden reappears..."<sup>52</sup> This important narrative ushers in the formal beginning of the romance just as it is concerned with the start of their love affair.

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<sup>51</sup> Kuthayyir 'Azzah, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, compiled by Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī, (Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyah al-'Āmmah li al-Kitāb, 1992) 9: 89.

<sup>52</sup> Frye, Romance, 149.

#### IV. Pastoralism and the Najd

As mentioned earlier, the symbolism of the Najd is an important pastoral element in the romance. J. Stetkevych, in his study of the pastoral in early Arabic poetry, has observed: "Among the numerous instances of the early manifestation of this regional nostalgic spirit [i.e., nostalgia for the Najd] is the poetry attributed to Majnūn, who seems to have been invented precisely to accommodate such feelings."<sup>53</sup> This theme of yearning for the Najd is a stock motif of pre-Islamic poetry but as Stetkevych points out, "in the post-Jāhiliya [i.e., early Islamic] period...metaphorization and symbolic saturation [of names of places] become fully consummated."<sup>54</sup> After the rise of Islam, this topos acquired new significances, new connotations, given Bedouin dispersion and displacement in the wave of military conquests. The eclipse of a 'Bedouin homeland' by the importance of the conquered territories seems to have been keenly felt by the various tribes comprising the armies.

The Bedouin poet thus began possessing Tihamah, the Hijāz, and, above all, the Najd when he stepped out of them; and when he had lost these regions in the dispersion of the empire, these places, these names, then possessed him.<sup>55</sup>

What are some of the traits of the Najd that lend themselves to its being

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<sup>53</sup>J. Stetkevych, *Zephyrs*, 116.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 107. It is questionable that Stetkevych only uses A. Sattar's edition of the *dīwān*. He thus may be relying on verses dating from a time much later than the Umayyad period to argue for changes he claims occurred in the Umayyad period. Using the *Aghānī* version would have at least delimited his material to the tenth-century.

<sup>55</sup>J. Stetkevych, *Zephyrs*, 116.

poetically treated thus? The "Najd...with the Hidjāz and al-Arūd forms Central Arabia; it is the centrally located high plateau of the Arabian peninsula...[and] the territory in which pure Arabic is spoken..."<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, it "has historically and legendarily enjoyed an undisputed claim to autochthony as regards purity of lineage and correctness of the Arabic language."<sup>57</sup> The geographical limits of the wilderness within which Majnūn roams are the "boundaries of al-Shām or al-Yaman." While al-Sham (north) and al-Yaman (south) represent the outer limits of this poetic space, the Najd is the locus centralis or the origin, the home or as Stetkevych puts it, "the autochthonous symbol."

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, scholars date the provenance of Majnūn Laylā to the early eighth century, during the time of the early Umayyad caliphate. J. Stetkevych's claims regarding the chronology of the topos of nostalgia for the Najd support this dating. He observes that "musings over broad regions of the Arabian peninsula, like the Hijaz, Tihamah and especially, the Najd are datable within that early Islamic [late seventh-century to early eighth-century] revival of Bedouin lyricism which culminated in the passionate, sentimental, and idealizing poetry known as 'Udhri ...'"<sup>58</sup>

This chronological evidence further confirms the idea that the 'inventors' (to use Stetkevych's term) and popularizers of the Majnūn Laylā romance were nomadic Bedouins and urbanites living in the Hijāz (the Najd is centrally located in the Hijāz) during the early Umayyad period. As

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<sup>56</sup>Encyclopedia of Islam, New Ed., s.v. "Najd."

<sup>57</sup>J. Stetkevych, Zephyrs, 141.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 115.

Stetkevych suggests, the nomads experience the loss of the Najd as a loss of an autochthonous site, a homeland. The Hījāzī urbanites experience the loss of the Najd as a loss of the political centrality of the Hījāz/Najd due to the transfer of the seat of the caliphate from the Hījāz to Damascus. J.

Stetkevych and S. Jayyusi<sup>59</sup> attest to the importance of this latter in the rise of 'Udhri poetry generally. Stetkevych remarks that the 'Najd enters the poetic realm most clearly during the Umayyad period when the displacement of positions and inversion of roles between the periphery (the outlying Damascus) and centrality (the Hījāz) yields a state of tension whereby "periphery claims centrality and centrality is reduced to periphery."<sup>60</sup> Both senses of loss (that experienced by nomads and urbanites) reflect the tensions experienced by Arab society in its transition from a Bedouin culture to an Islamic empire.

Returning to the romance's text, the following passage (of which there exist variants) effectively exhibits the pastoral symbolism of the Najd:

And they said he used to roam madly in the desert with the beasts... He began to roam until he reached the borders of al-Shām and when he regained his senses, he asked passers-by of the tribes of the Arabs about the Najd. It would be said to him: what do you have to do with the Najd? You are practically in the Shām. You are in such-and-such place. He would say: Show me the way [to the Najd]. They took mercy on him and offered to give him a mount or some clothes but he refused. They directed him toward the Najd and he headed that way. (22)

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<sup>59</sup> Salma Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry" in the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature I: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period, ed. A. F. L. Beeston, et. al., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>60</sup>J. Stetkevych, Zephyrs, 121.

A powerful portrayal of his nostalgia for the region is also found in the narrative below. While at the well of Maymūn in Mecca, he is shown pining for the chance to breathe the *sabā* (zephyr or east wind of the Najd).<sup>61</sup> In Majnūn's poetry concerning the *sabā*, it is often its healing and curative powers that are foregrounded. The coolness of the breeze is supposed to soothe the fever of love and the poet believes that if he, as the afflicted lover, breathes its air, his concerns or *humūm* will become clear:

*Indeed, the east wind is a breeze which when it blows over a pained soul, its worries become manifest. (26)*

In this narrative, the local inhabitants are shown fearing that Majnūn's despair is such that he will throw himself off a mountain. This tension is only alleviated when a traveler from the Najd appears on the scene and assuages his nostalgia through conversation about the region:

[The traveller]...asked: What is he doing here and why are you holding him? They replied: Because of what he does to himself, for he treats himself so vilely that even his enemies would have mercy on him. He pleads: Take me out to breathe the east wind of Najd. So we bring him out here, and he turns toward the region of Najd hoping that the east wind would blow in his direction. We do not like to leave him alone, for fear he might throw himself down from the mountain. Be kind, come

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<sup>61</sup>J. Stetkevych says of *al-sabā* (east wind): "*Al-sabā* opposes it [referring to *al-dabūr*, the west wind] with its softness, the ability to seed rain-laden clouds, and thus with fecundity. As a bearer of perfume-drenched messages from the beloved, *al-sabā* is also the wind of love's promise - or remembrance - and of good tidings." J. Stetkevych, *Zephyrs*, 125.



close and let him know you have come from the Najd. When he asks you how things are in the Najd and in his home, let him know. I said: I will do so. They told him: O Abū l-Mahdī, this is a man who has come from the region of the Najd. He sighed so deeply that I thought his heart had broken. Then he began to ask me about it, valley by valley and place by place. While I described it for him, he cried in the most intense and heartbreaking manner. Then he recited: (23)

*Would that I knew if the two hills of Qana  
through the length of the night, have changed after my parting,  
And if the high winds blow on Najd  
when they carry the smell of lavender.....*

In both passages, Majnūn's remembrance of being at home in the Najd is closely intertwined with his awareness of its absence in his present. Yet undoubtedly, as is true of the pastoral, its evocation yields a plenitude to mitigate the perceived lack in the present. His aforementioned verses are a celebration of the beauty of the Najd, and all the senses are evoked in the remembrance of the Najd's physical landscape. The descriptions of the feel of the east wind and the scent of lavender also suggest a nostalgia for a spring season.

What is highly significant is that the instances in which Majnūn is depicted lost and pining for the Najd only occur after he has had contact with a ritual site, and more tellingly, after this contact has been somehow abused by him. In the passage cited first, he has just disrupted his performance of the Ḥajj at the Ka'ba and in the narrative above he has just visited the tomb of the prophet with his father in the hope of recovering from his lovesickness. Ritual transgression seems to be implicit even in this second example, given his disoriented and confused state. Only after

mocking and subverting religious rituals does he become the wild man, displaced and nostalgic for his homeland, the Najd, just as only after transgressing courtship rituals does he lose his mind and pine for Laylā . Thus, built into this Najd pastoralism, this Bedouin sentimentalism, is an Islamic subtext consisting of intimations of a moral nature that recast Majnūn's search and pining for the Najd as the wild madman lost and astray as a result of his transgressions. From the vantage of the new Islamic order, Majnūn is hardly a tragic figure; only from the perspective of the old Bedouin ethos, as I have argued, can his character be cloaked in pathos.

#### V. Laylā and the Najd

According to J. Stetkevych, the love story of Majnūn Laylā "celebrates to an equal degree the beloved Laylā and Najd." Loss of a woman is accompanied by the loss of an autochthonous home. The parallels in the symbolism expressing his yearning for Laylā and nostalgia for the Najd are unmistakably present in the Aghānī rendition of the romance (though perhaps not to the extent of Stetkevych's "equal degree"). Sentiment, space, and time are all intimately intertwined in the romance. Majnūn longs for all three: Laylā (beloved), the Najd (where he met his beloved) and childhood (time of togetherness with beloved). Absence of the beloved is akin to a state of suspension, a state of liminality:

*When I do not meet Laylā I am as if suspended  
with thin ropes, whirling between plain and mountain (61)<sup>62</sup>*

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<sup>62</sup>This translation is from A. Khairallah's book Love, Madness and Poetry, 81.

Laylā and the Najd are sentimentally and symbolically linked in multiple ways. As just noted, they are both objects of his yearning. Second, as objects of yearning, both have been once 'possessed' (idyllic) and then lost (pathos). Memories of this possession continue to inspire the yearning. Majnūn misses the Najd only when he is far from it, when he is at the borders of al-Sham or al-Yemen, just as he craves Laylā only when distant from her. The memory and loss of both Laylā and the Najd (very Bedouin symbols and symbols of social aggregation), are highly sentimentalized. Both are associated with innocence. According to the story, he met, played, and fell in love with Laylā in the Najd at or around Mt. Taubad. Another narrative describes his visit to this mountain, a site of his childhood love, and the account relates how the visit evokes memories that traumatize him, such that he ends up madly wandering in al-Shām. (52)

Actually, as symbols of social aggregation, both Laylā and the Najd elude Majnūn. The romance's indexing of distance between him and these symbols emphasizes his wildness, his social liminality and the tragic nature of his character:

To stress Qays' alienation from society, the Arabic versions of the legend described him wandering aimlessly, so that he found himself on the approaches to Syria or alternatively, to the Yemen; he asks for directions and returns to the Najd. He never entirely cuts himself off from his family, and he is never completely abandoned by them...Qays' solitary behaviour was antithetical to the very strong bonds that existed normally between the individual and family.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Dols, Majnūn: The Mad Man, 333.

Yet evocations, of both Laylā and the Najd, also mentally and physically reorient him. Just as mention of his beloved's name makes him temporarily lucid, likewise the memory of the Najd and his obsession with finding and reaching it function as an attempt at recovery after disorientation.

Importantly, the Najd also functions as a sacred space, as a pilgrimage site that supplants the Islamic one. His (ostensibly) mad wanderings and his gravitations toward the Najd themselves have a ritual dimension.

Given the parallel symbolism between Laylā and the region of the Najd in the romance, an identification of limited allegorical strains becomes possible. Thus, the beloved personifies a region that, as already mentioned, is territorially the heart of the Arabian peninsula and considered the site of origin for the linguistic purity of the Arabic language. In our romance, Laylā's father, like the prophet Muḥammad, partly relegates 'control' over his prized possession to a member of the Thaqīf. In other words, it is to a man from the Thaqīf, as one of the tribes that was politically privileged by the prophet, that Majnūn loses Laylā.<sup>64</sup> The Thaqīf, as noted above, was one of the few tribes (along with the Quraysh and the *Anṣār*) to whom Muḥammad granted political leverage in the new Islamic power structures. Majnūn, constructed as a Bedouin member of a politically deprived nomadic tribe, the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a, loses his beloved to a man from the wealthy, politically empowered tribe of Thaqīf.<sup>65</sup>

Not surprisingly, Ward ibn Thaqīf is described in the romance

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<sup>64</sup>But the Thaqīf and Quraysh also became rivals in the control over certain religious sanctuaries. Vadet mentions that the Thaqīf strove to "attract their bellicose and restless neighbors, the Sa'sa'a," to their defense. Vadet, 83.

<sup>65</sup>On the bad reputation of the Thaqīf, see I. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, 96.

primarily in terms of his wealth—a factor that induces Majnūn to accuse Laylā's father of selling her off to the highest bidder. Thus, even his complaints against the bartering of Laylā take on a certain allegorical significance. Perhaps, his sense of betrayal allegorically refer to the sense of loss and abandonment experienced by some of the Bedouin tribes after the establishment of the Islamic caliphate and its ruling dynasties.

### Pledges Broken: the Bedouin vs. the State

Ignaz Goldziher has stated that "it is well known that the subjugation of the Bedouins under the laws of the state was always the most difficult part of the state administration in the East in old as in modern times."<sup>66</sup> The centralized state was a fundamental change to be adapted to by nomadic tribes that had previously functioned as nearly autonomous units. Moreover, the process of adaptation to their new identity as settled subjects of the Islamic state generated rising expectations among the Bedouin tribes that were largely unmet.<sup>67</sup> Taha Husayn attributes the preponderance of the

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 65. Also, see his discussion of how *hilf* (confederation) among Arab tribes was challenged by Islam. Ibid., 65-70.

<sup>67</sup>Tahar Labib Djedadi, relying on Marxist theory, has argued that these stories can be considered a literary expression of the 'Udhri tribe's resistance to economic and social marginalization experienced in the Umayyad period. T. Djedadi, La poésie amoureuse des Arabes: Le cas des 'Udrites. Contribution à une sociologie de la littérature arabe (Alger, 1974).

melancholy and nostalgic in 'Udhri poetry to this disparity between expectation and reality:

In his view, the now [during the end of Umayyad period] Islamized Bedouin poets had been influenced by the idealizing and refining factors in their new faith, but they did not join in the new civilization and its benefits. Thus, in isolation and facing the frustration of their awakened material expectations, these poets turned inward, complaining and idealizing, their complaint being aimed at present conditions and their idealizing at the past, presumably before Islam, when life was better or when those new expectations did not exist.<sup>68</sup>

In this romance, too, there are several narratives that foreground such a disparity between expectation and reality as perceived by Majnūn, the Bedouin 'wild man,' but they concern expectations of a different sort. These narratives clearly emphasize the unreliability of the state as perceived by the Bedouin, an unreliability in terms of both keeping pledges and arbitration of disputes.<sup>69</sup>

The narratives portray attempts by state governing elites to resolve the conflict between Majnūn and Laylā's family. We find two such consecutive narrative units in al-Isfahānī's rendering, each involving a

<sup>68</sup> J. Stetkevych, *Zephyrs*, 1993, 115, quoting Tāhā Ḥusayn, *Hadīth al-Arbi'ā'* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif bi Miṣr, 1954) vol. I, 216-18.

<sup>69</sup> In the love story of *Qays Lubna*, the character of a mediator rather than arbitrator is present. This mediator, represented as Ḥusayn, the Prophet's grandson, successfully plays a role in the marriage arrangement between the two young lovers. Although the nature of the intervention as well as its outcome differ from that in the *Majnūn Laylā* romance, it is noteworthy that both stories have a mediator/arbitrator figure involved in the love plot. *Qays Lubnā*, in *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, compiled by Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī, vol. 9, 180-249 (Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyah al-'Āmmah li al-Kitāb, 1992).

different political figure. (16-19) Ibn Qutayba presents a single narrative involving a single figure. The figure common to both versions of the romance is Nawfal b. Musāḥiq, an historical figure, who was the governor of Medīna in 83/702.<sup>70</sup>

Nawfal, an appointee of the state, comes to the 'Āmir tribe to collect taxes. This description of the representative of empire in terms of revenue-collection is consistent with historical fact, since after the establishment of the caliphate, the most substantial link between the state and the tribes was through taxes. After having espied Majnūn and inquired about his plight, this bureaucrat of the state becomes interested in civilizing the wild man: he pledges to marry Majnūn to Laylā. Ultimately however, Nawfal is unable to keep his promise to Majnūn.

As mentioned before, in al-Isfahānī's story, there are two consecutive units involving resolution attempted by political elites. The structure and sequence of events in both units is similar; but Nawfal is the subject in the second unit whereas the first concerns a notable named 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Auf. This latter too makes a pledge to Majnūn and then is unable to adhere to it. He offers Majnūn some camels as compensation for breaking his promise but the poet rejects his offer.

It is this violation of oath on the part of Nawfal that is foregrounded in Majnūn's verses accompanying this narrative. The importance of the vow in both pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arab society has been discussed by R. Mottahedeh in his work.<sup>71</sup> In these verses, the poet castigates

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<sup>70</sup>Encyclopedia of Islam, New Ed., s.v. "Majnūn."

<sup>71</sup>Roy Mottahedeh, Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

himself at "being led to follow any course" in the quest for his beloved and expresses the pain and bitterness of being betrayed by friend and foe.

Just why is it that both state notables are depicted as failing in their attempts to arbitrate the dispute between Majnūn and the family of his beloved? The narratives suggest that the principal reason is the fact that the authorities have already sided with Laylā's family against Majnūn by granting them the right to kill with impunity should he enter their home. Both political notables are unable to represent effectively the cause of one who has been rendered *persona non grata*, one who has been made liminal in the legal, social, and political senses by the state government. In their responses to the overtures made by both Nawfal and 'Abd al-Rahmān, Laylā's folk categorically reject any form of reconciliation and they invoke the sultan's punitive measures against Majnūn as proof of the seriousness of the poet's unacceptable conduct. According to her folk, Majnūn is uninterested in anything honorable such as marriage. They adduce as evidence for their claim Majnūn's instigation of the scandal concerning Laylā, and his repeated forced entry into their homes after the refusal of his marriage proposal, as well as his tendency to lampoon them in his poetry.

From the perspective of the Bedouin poet, however, the state's elites, are unable to keep their promises to him and to aid him in his desire to marry Laylā. They renege on their promises to domesticate the Bedouin wild man despite his apparent willingness to be re-integrated into the social order. Ultimately, the state cannot help the Bedouin with the one thing that has become difficult for him after the advent of Islam—a sense of belonging or identity.



### Romance Hero vs. Muslim Anti-Hero

A number of Majnūn's verses reveal an incompatibility between love and religion. This incompatibility, ironically, is most effectively conveyed through an annexation of the phraseology of Islam. A. Hamori has stated that "the poaching on religious language, which is in fun in 'Umar and the poets of his school, is meant in the 'Udhri lyric to express the extent of this dangerous devotion [to love]. Thus for Jamīl those who die of love are martyrs, no less than those who fall in the *jihād* (holy war)..."<sup>72</sup>

*They said: Take part in the holy war [jihād], Jamīl, go on a raid!  
But what jihād do I want besides the one that has to do with women?  
Conversation in their company brings joy but each man who dies  
in their midst is a martyr.*<sup>73</sup>

Here, Jamīl clearly argues against an existing discourse that constructs masculinity in terms of physical prowess and aggression exerted in raids and

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<sup>72</sup> Andras Hamori, "Love Poetry (Ghazal)" in The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, 'Abbasid Belles-Lettres. Julia Ashtiany, et. al., eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 206.

<sup>73</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) 46. As Joseph Bell has pointed out, 'Muslim orthodoxy held the real *jihād* to be the *jihād al-nafs* or the battle against one's own passions, not the *jihād* as redefined by a Bedouin poet-lover like Jamīl, who in its view, surrendered to his passions.' J. Bell, Love Theory, 17-18. See my discussion of this issue in Chapter Five. Jamīl's poetic use of the term *jihād* in this verse also has resonances with the famous *ḥadīth al-īshq* which the Zāhirī jurist Ibn Dāwūd quotes in his love treatise entitled Kitāb al-Zahra. The Arabic text of this saying or *ḥadīth* is: *man 'ashīqa fa-'affa fa-katamahu fa-māta fa-huwa shahīdun*. This is translated as: "One who passionately loves and is chaste and conceals his love or his secret, and then dies, is a martyr."

battles. According to this religious discourse, for a man to die fighting for the Muslim *ummah* was a heroic feat meriting the highest reward; such a feat allowed one a station in heaven. Jamil bids for martyrdom by asserting that since he suffers on a battleground where he too is slain--albeit slain by love for women--he also qualifies as a martyr-hero. The women's converse and company that Jamil, as a lover-poet, frequents and fawns over is portrayed as being dangerous. Just as the Muslim fighter of *jihād* is wounded and killed while defending his community against the corrupt influences of the unbelievers, the poet-lover claims that he suffers and dies while defending himself against the fatal attractions of women.

As noted, two textual strains characterize the Kitāb al-Aghānī's rendition of the Majnūn Laylā romance. One is a morally didactic, religious strain according to which love is seen as a deviation from Islamic conduct. This strain casts Majnūn as an outright sinner and social outcast as well as rendering him an absurdly effeminate and ridiculous character. Another is a tragically romantic strain according to which conformity to Islamic mores is seen as a deviation from love. This romantic Bedouin subtext embodies Majnūn as an ideal lover who heroically pursues the ennobling adventure of courtship and passion.

To illustrate just how these two strains are interwoven into the text of the romance, and to demonstrate how their interweaving characterizes Majnūn as both a romance hero and an Islamic anti-hero, I cite and discuss the following selection from the story:

When Qays ibn Mulawwah's mind became disordered and he abandoned food and drink, his mother betook herself to Laylā and said to her: Indeed, Qays' love for you has robbed him of his senses

and he has forsaken sustenance. If you were to go see him...I think his sanity would return. Laylā then said: Not during the day, since I do not trust what may happen to me at the hands of my clan, but during the night-- [yes]. So she went to him during the night and related to him: 'Qays, your mother claims that you went mad [juninta] because of me and that you have left food and drink. Fear God and have mercy on yourself.' He began to weep and then he recited:

*She said: 'You have lost your mind over me' I said  
to her*

*Love is greater than what [afflicts] the madmen;  
One entrusted with love, the possessor [sahib] of  
love, does not recover from it for eternity,  
Whereas the madman is only felled by it for a time.*

Then she wept with him and the two conversed almost until dawn, when she bid him farewell and departed. (36)

Here, while an Islamic strain present in the narrative accompanying the verses depicts Majnūn as a pathetically sub-human and depraved lunatic, more deserving of pity than admiration, a romantic, Bedouin subtext exemplified in the character's own verses, recasts him as a noble and tragic lover whose trial of passion is eternal.

In other words, a morally didactic vein in the romance portrays Majnūn in an anti-heroic light, as a youth who has been reduced to a wild madman and a sissy because he is obsessed with women. This didactic subtext also has a woman blamed for the lover's breakdown. But a woman, Laylā, is constructed as both the affliction of and the cure for the pathetic victim, for the lover's mother suggests that were the beloved to visit him he

would recover from his malady. Laylā represents herself as the voice of religious conservatism and piety in her counsel to Majnūn .

Majnūn's own voice ironically argues for a rereading and reclassification of his character-type. In his verses, he casts himself not as a victimized madman, but as the eternally suffering Lover. Thus, a Bedouin romantic subtext constructs the lover's experience as a heroic feat rather than a breakdown. He is the lover-poet who nobly privileges his passion for a beloved above all else. A lover, Majnūn claims, is a nobler species than a madman and unlike the latter, a lover desires to be perpetually slain, perpetually felled by passion. True love, in contrast to a crazed infatuation, is romanticized as an affliction from which recovery is not only impossible but undesirable. Thus, Majnūn is dramatized and dramatizes himself as a Bedouin tragic hero trapped in a conflict between poetic and social conventions, between passion and society.

In the anecdote cited below, too, Majnūn is cast as a wild madman and a social pariah because of his transgressions against Islamic divine injunctions.

When Majnūn of Banū 'Āmir said

*He decreed her for one other than me and so tried  
me with love of her.*

*Was there not anything else with which to try me other than  
Laylā ?*

The night rang with: 'You are the one ungrateful of God's decree and rebellious of his commands.' Then he went mad and became wild and unsociable. Since that night, he has roamed aimlessly with the beasts [*dhahaba ma' al-wahsh 'ala wajhihi*]. And the *qasīdah* (ode) in which this verse is uttered is among the most famous of his poetry...(68)

A direct causal link is posited, in this anecdote, between what is described as Majnūn 's ingratitude and rebelliousness toward God, on the one hand, and his madness and wildness, on the other hand. Just as Iblīs (Satan), who doubted and disobeyed God, was cast out of paradise, likewise Majnūn , shown questioning and decrying God's decrees in his verse and, by implication, defying the divine trial to which he has been subjected, is cast out of human society.

In Ibn Qutayba's text of Majnūn Laylā, we find the following verses attributed to Majnūn :

*At Mecca, by night, the pilgrims prayed to God  
beseeching forgiveness for their sins,  
While I called: O God, the first thing I ask for myself is Laylā , then  
be my reckoner.  
If Laylā is given to me in my lifetime, no worshipper's repentance  
will be greater than mine.<sup>74</sup>*

Proclaiming his passion for a woman to be on a level more sublime than any allegiance to authority, be it the state or God, Majnūn rejects becoming a pious, rational subject of the Islamic state. The verses cited below, though falsely attributed, according to Ibn Qutayba, are nonetheless linked with Majnūn in the popular imagination and again reflect how profane love is privileged by him over

divine love:

*Welcome be the work of Satan,*

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<sup>74</sup>Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Shi'r wa al-Shu'arā, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif bi Misr, 1966) 569. This translation is As'ad Khairallah's in his Love, Madness, and Poetry, appendix, 140.

*If my love for her is Satan's work!<sup>75</sup>*

The narrative depicting Majnūn being taken for pilgrimage is yet another instance of his disregard for Islamic mores and practices. It describes how, when he is taken to Mecca by his father, instead of pleading for divine help in overcoming his obsession with Laylā, he implores God to intensify and magnify this obsession. Thus, Majnūn, as a pagan Bedouin, is shown subverting Islamic beliefs by invoking God's help in deepening his devotion to an earthly being rather than seeking assistance from Him in distancing himself from matters profane and ungodly. Also, in this narrative, rather than the Divine Word, a crier's cry of the word "Laylā" acts as inducer of ecstasy in Majnūn.

The two textual strains--didactic Islamic versus romanticized Bedouin--that characterize the Kitāb al-Aghānī's rendition of the Majnūn Laylā romance are also visible in the other 'Udhri romances. From the love stories of Jamīl Buthaynah and Kuthayyir 'Azzah, I quote the following two anecdotes in which the beloveds astutely present themselves as revered icons in the religion of love, and in so doing implicitly mock the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik's position as a revered ruler of the Islamic state. In these anecdotes, 'Azzah and Buthaynah analogize between their status as the sovereign beloved and the caliph's status as the beloved sovereign. In Jamīl Buthaynah, we find:

Buthaynah was introduced to 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. He saw a silly minor and said to her: What did Jamīl see in you?  
She said: That which the people saw in you when they

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 573. Translation, Khairallah, 143.

appointed you the caliph. Then 'Abd al-Malik laughed until the black teeth that he used to conceal were visible.<sup>76</sup>

In Kuthayyir 'Azzah, it is related:

'Azzah, having aged, was granted an audience with 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. He exclaimed: You are 'Azzah Kuthayyir! She said: I am 'Azzah bint Ḥumayl. He said: You are the one to whom Kuthayyir declaimed:

*Within 'Azzah is a fire that dims not*

*A star she is when we gaze at her from afar.*

What about you pleased him? She said: O Commander of the Believers, during his time, I was better than the fire of a chilly night. [A variant relates:] She answered: What pleased him about me is what pleased the Muslims about you when they made you the caliph. He ['Abd al-Malik] had blackened teeth that he used to hide, and he laughed until they were revealed. She said: This is what I intended to make manifest.<sup>77</sup>

According to a didactic Islamic strain, the caliph 'Abd al-Malik, seeing a young minor, Buthaynah, before him, in the first anecdote and an old woman, 'Azzah, before him, in the second anecdote, bluntly asks the beloved in each case, 'What did your lover see in you?' In other words, in each anecdote, the caliph 'Abd al-Malik is shown denigrating the beloved either on the basis of her overly minor or overly senior status. Yet, while the caliph diminishes the beloveds, a romanticized Bedouin subtext has them cleverly and wittily turn the 'textual tables' on the religious leader. By boldly using his caliphal status as a metaphor for their own sovereign

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<sup>76</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah, 8: 122.

<sup>77</sup>Kuthayyir 'Azzah, 9: 27.

position as beloveds, the women elevate themselves to his regal position. Buthaynah and 'Azzah are portrayed declaring themselves the supreme heads of their love relations. Even while ceremoniously deferring to the authority of the caliph, they underscore their own power by drawing parallels between his position and theirs. The symbolism of 'concealed blackened teeth' and 'worm-eaten teeth' seems to bear some significance in the romance of Jamīl Buthaynah as well, for in another anecdote from that story, Buthaynah criticizes the poet-lover for declaiming satirical verses in which he describes her teeth as worm-eaten.<sup>78</sup> In these two anecdotes, this symbolism seems to be an aspect of the sparring between the women and the caliph: the caliph's insinuation that the women's lovers somehow were misled into falling in love with them seems to be countered with the message that the Muslim believers, too, were deceived by outward appearances in their bestowal of authority to the caliph, since his blackened, decayed teeth hide an internal corruption. It is also interesting that the beloveds, by analogizing themselves to the supreme male head of the Muslim community, gender themselves masculine.

Perhaps to provide comic relief, perhaps to demonstrate how much more pervasive "things Bedouin" than "Islamic" were in the consciousness of even a muezzin, al-Isfahānī transmits an anecdote in which, in his call for prayer, the muezzin accidentally utters the word for lambs (*bahm*) in place of the word for prayer (*salāt*) after just having heard Majnūn's pastoral couplet sung aloud.

At the time when Ibn Mulayka was making the prayer call, he heard

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 104-105. 'Abd al-Mālik was sometimes called "Father of Flies" in reference to his notorious bad breath.



al-Akhdar al-Juddī singing from the abode of al-‘Āṣ ibn Wā’il:

*I fell in love with a belle when she  
                                     was a girl with a forelock,  
 when the swelling of her breasts had not yet  
                                     been manifested to playmates.*

*Two children guarding the lambs.  
 Would that we never had grown up, nor had  
                                     the lambs grown old. (12)*

He intended to say: “Come to prayer [*al-ṣalāt*],” but then he said: “Come to the lambs,” and the people of Mecca heard him. So he went out in the morning to apologize to them.

## Chapter 4: Secrecy and Revelation

In medieval Arabic culture, a secret or suppressed love was considered a profoundly true love. Yet, paradoxically, all the great lovers were those who spoke about their love--i.e., poets. Poets were lovers because there existed a well-acknowledged connection between poetic language and sexual desire in medieval Arabic culture.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, male desire, specifically the desire for woman, was produced by language. The imaging and pursuit of woman as fantasy was done through both speaking with women and listening to either the words of women or words about women. The role of language in engendering desire is evident in the following anecdote from the tenth-century romance of Majnūn Laylā:

Al-Majnūn was addicted to the conversation of women and enamored of them. News of her [Laylā] reached him and she was described to him (*nu'itat lahu*). Then he fell in love with her and resolved to visit her. (44)

The above passage shows that hearing women's speech and poetic speech (hearsay) were two primary sources of male desire. Whereas the "conversation of women" (words of women) renders Majnūn desirous of

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<sup>1</sup>The Arabic verb *khatāba* means 'to orate' as well as 'to woo.' The word *jamala* means both 'to rhetorically embellish' and 'to flatter.' As pointed out by Catherine Bates, the link between rhetoric and courtship is very strong in medieval European literature as well. Bates states: "'Courting' lent itself to the art of love-making because wooing a member of the opposite sex came to be regarded as a highly complex, tactical, and strategic rhetorical procedure." Catherine Bates, The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 11.

their company in general, "news of [Laylā ]" (poetic words about a woman) engenders his desire for a specific woman. For his desire for Laylā , in the aforementioned anecdote, specifically stems from his hearing descriptive (poetic) speech about her. The verb used for "described" in the above passage is *nu'ita* and it is synonymous with *wusifa*, which means 'to be poetically described.' In many of the medieval Arabic treatises on love, among the causes of desire is "love through a description [*wasf*]" or 'love through hearsay.' *Wasf* is also the generic term for a type of poem in which tropes such as simile and metaphor predominate. In other words, according to the above passage, it is with Laylā as image, Laylā as trope, that Majnūn first falls in love.

The imaging of woman also could occur through seeing her in person or in representation, an example of the latter being a vision of her in a dream. Yet gazing at a woman was like listening to her words in that both sight and sound were linked with language through their generation of images in the mind, images that were coterminous with and resulted in desire. In the medieval Arabic tracts on love, seeing a woman (or an image of her) had the same role as hearing a woman's language in the origination of male desire. As we shall see, the male lover perceived women's words as he viewed women's bodies--as ornaments of seduction.

Furthermore, language conducted desire as well as constituted it. Language was also the medium through which desire expressed itself and sought satisfaction. A man's speech, as well as his listening and gazing, were not just causes of the love-quest but also stages in it. His linguistic prowess was the main credential that established his status as a lover. A

man's desire was articulated through the eloquence of his own language. Thus, his language, his love lyric, was ultimately self-referential for it had more to do with his relation to himself than with his relation to woman. In fact, even seeing a woman (or an image of her) or hearing a woman's language was a self-referential activity: she mirrored his own image just as her speech mirrored his own poetic language. In medieval romance, as noted by Susan Crane and other critics, "the masculine gaze...both establishes feminine beauty as its object of desire and sees masculinity reflected back to itself in the difference between the ideal feminine and masculine identity."<sup>2</sup>

Yet why was suppression of language or secrecy posited as a cardinal tenet of true love in medieval Arabic culture when the connection between desire and language was so central? Or what propelled the drive toward suppression in love when love and linguistic expression were so closely linked? Why was secrecy made so paramount?

### The Dialectic of Secrecy and Revelation

We gain some insight into the answers to these questions when we briefly consider the etymology of the Arabic word for secret, *sirr*. *Sirr* is a highly multivalent term and its multivalency, it seems to me, colours to one degree or another the entire conception of love in medieval Arabic literature. Initially, it should be pointed out that according to the Lisān al-‘Arab and Lane's Lexicon, it has contrary meanings: it means 'a secret; a thing that is concealed, or suppressed' as well as 'a thing that is revealed,

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Crane, Gender and Romance in the Canterbury Tales (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 74.

or is made manifest.' Both the Form I verb, *sarra*, especially the Form IV verb, *asarra*, have these two opposing significations: he kept it secret and he revealed it. The encapsulation of these contrary meanings in the word *sirr* suggests a kind of logic or dialectic of the secret: a secret is not a secret until it is revealed to someone, so secrecy invites revelation, and this revelation, in turn, entails concealment. In other words, if secrecy paradoxically invites disclosure, this disclosure also generates concealment. Exposure or the revelation of the secret is the loss of the secret, and this loss entails the evanescence or concealment of something specific to the secret.

The multivalency of the word *sirr* is also evident in its linking of the emotional or cognitive with the sexualized body, in other words the link of the hidden with that of the manifest. *Sirr* means the heart or the mind as well as 'the penis of a man...and the vulva of a woman.' This is an extremely important link and it can be interpreted in several different ways. First, it suggests that the sexual organs are the manifest bodily signs of internal feelings and desires. Second, the choice of the sexual organs as the manifest signs with which the inner is linked casts a sexual hue on internal emotions and thoughts, so that what is most secret, most intimate, is that which is sexual. One can see from this link how the verbal sharing of a secret with another acquires connotations of a sexual intimacy. Furthermore, one may infer from this link that the public revelation of either one's own desire or another person's is akin to a public denuding. In other words, revelation of the secret is taboo as the display of the sexual organs. Third, the link between the inner bodily organs (i.e., the heart and mind) and the outer organs itself implies the dialectic of secrecy and

revelation: what the heart conceals, the outer body reveals, and what the body reveals must be kept covered, that is, the external signs of the body must be concealed. Again, we see how secrecy invites revelation and this revelation implies concealment.

As is evident, the etymology of *sirr* is suggestive of many parallels between the secret, on the one hand, and sexual desire, on the other hand. This parallelism is further corroborated by having the semantic field of *sirr* also include meanings such as 'a hidden or secret pleasure' and 'to take delight in.'<sup>3</sup> Gender associations in the etymology of *sirr* support this nexus between secrecy and sexual desire. A *sirriyya* is 'a free woman with whom one has sexual intercourse secretly' or a prostitute and a *surriyya* is a 'female concubine-slave.' The fifth and tenth forms of the verb *sarra* mean 'to take to oneself a concubine-slave.' Hence, a 'secret' is also defined as a female paramour that is to be hidden, especially if the sexual relation with her is illicit.

These aspects of the dialectic of secrecy and revelation--how revelation causes the loss of the secret and the links between secrecy and desire--begin to shed light on why secrecy was enshrined in the medieval Arabic discourse on love and desire.<sup>4</sup> Just as a secret is not a secret until it is revealed, likewise, desire is not desire until it is expressed. But if desire is

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<sup>3</sup> In Ibn Qutaybah's *Uyūn al-Akḥbār*, we find the following saying: *man asarra asrārahu dāmar lahu ladhdhathu*. Ibn Qutaybah, "Kitāb al-Nisā," in *Uyūn al-Akḥbār*, (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Misriya, 1930) 4:137.

<sup>4</sup>We also note that revelation of the secret occurs in two sometimes overlapping ways: secrets may be disclosed through an inner/outer dynamics of bodily signs (spatial aspect of secrecy) or they may be revealed verbally (linguistic aspect). Likewise, concealment of the secret has its overlapping spatial (dissimulation) and verbal (lying, suppression of speech, tropological language) dimensions.

not desire until it is expressed, this expression of desire, in turn, results in the eclipse of desire's object. Revelation of desire results in the disappearance of that which desire seeks, that is, the love object.

### **Male Expression and Female Elusiveness**

When we turn to the connections between language and desire within the story of Majnūn Laylā, the dialectic of secrecy and revelation is again evinced. The romance shows that the moment desire is born, it seeks expression or revelation. Once desire is revealed, the object of desire is concealed. Thus, there is a central connection between male linguistic expression (revelation) and female secrecy in the romance. Time and time again, the text of the romance quite self-consciously enacts this dialectic of male revelation and female secrecy. Certainly, the overarching causal connection in the romance, between Majnūn's poetry about Laylā and Laylā's concealment from him, is indisputable. This dialectic is especially evident in the romance's multiple narrations of how Majnūn falls in love with Laylā. Three different versions of how the lovers meet and fall in love are presented, and in each, revelation of desire is followed by the concealment of desire's object.

The following narrative and couplet present the first version of how the two lovers meet:

Majnūn was in love with Laylā , daughter of Mahdi ibn Sa'ad..... whose nickname was 'Umm Mālik, when they were children. Each fell in love with the other while they were out tending the flocks of their families. They continued thus until they grew up and then she was veiled from him. And the following saying of his indicates this:

*I fell in love with Laylā when she  
 was just a girl with a forelock,  
 when the swelling of her breasts had not yet been  
 manifested to playmates.  
 Two children tending the lambs.  
 Would that we never had grown up, nor had  
 the lambs grown old. (11)*

First, merely the use of words such as *hujibāt* ('to be veiled'), *badā* ('to become manifest'), *bahm* (meaning 'lambs' but also 'secrecy, concealment, obscurity'), as well as *hajm thadyiha* and *dhāt du'aba* ('swelling of her breasts' and 'possessing a forelock,' both of which are corporeal metaphors for revelation) suggests that motifs regarding secrecy and disclosure are being expressed in this narrative and couplet. Second, concealment is associated with Laylā in the love affair's end when she is veiled from the poet. The word *atrāb*, meaning 'mates, companions,' refers to the gossip-mongers among the lovers' cronies, that is, the calumniators or bad-mouthers.<sup>5</sup>

Through the reference to falling in love with Laylā before her breasts sprout, the poet suggests that during the inception of his affair, the object of his desire (Laylā), indeed his desire itself, was concealed from the gossip-mongers. In its infancy, the poet's desire--symbolically linked with the young girl's absent breasts, the infancy and innocence of the child-lovers, as well as the lambs--was chaste and concealed. Prior to being

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn Dawūd discusses the *atrāb* in his chapter with the heading: "One whose sweethearts love him, his cronies [*atrāb*] accuse him falsely." Ibn Dawūd, *Kitāb al-Zahra*, 42.



expressed, desire was in a naturally innocent state as are the children and lambs. The phrase "two children tending the lambs" may be interpreted as the two young lovers safeguarding their chaste secrets or desires.

In the couplet, the maturation of both the children and the lambs represents revelation of the secret. This explains why the poet recites, "would that we never had grown up, nor had the lambs grown old." In effect, he is bemoaning the inevitability of the secret's revelation for it leads to the loss of his beloved (she is veiled from him). The concealment associated with Laylā being veiled from the poet is tragically negative, since it represents the vanishing of the love object once the poet's desire is linguistically revealed or expressed. Laylā's being veiled signifies the evanescence of the love object once revelation has occurred.

Another narrative sketchily describing the inception of their affair states:

When Majnūn first fell in love with Laylā, he used to sing her praises often [*kathīr al-dhikr lahā*] and visit her at night. The Bedouins used to regard as not unacceptable that youths or lads converse with lasses. When her family came to know of his love for her, they banned him from visiting her... (43)

Here again, we see how embodiment of the love object in speech, that is 'singing the beloved's praises often' (*kathīr al-dhikr lahā*), results in this object's evanescence. It should also be noted that the above passage suggests that Majnūn's linguistic performance establishes him as a lover; his verbal prowess is the credential offered for his status as a lover. If his linguistic virtuosity determines his status as a lover, then the germination of his desire

occurs in and through language.<sup>6</sup> Whereas the analysis of the narrative/couplet quoted earlier suggests that the birth and infancy of Majnūn's desire may be pre-linguistic (since the maturation of his desire is represented as linguistic expression), this passage demonstrates that language itself engenders his desire.

Thus, not surprisingly, Majnūn is described primarily in terms of his eloquence in poetry and conversation throughout the romance. It is mentioned that he was the best in the arts of conversation (15) and "the most comely, elegant and brilliant in the poetry of the Bedouins." Indeed, the above passage indicates that courtship among the Bedouins fundamentally consisted of linguistic displays (conversation and poetic declamation). Yet, as I will argue in Chapter Seven, a textual strain within the romance (possibly reflective of another model of courtship) renders impermissible the speaking publicly about love for a woman. According to this strain, although the role of language in the conception of desire is recognized, revelation or putting the love object to expression is condemned. Predictably, the poet's revelation leads to the beloved's concealment: "When they came to know of his love for her [male revelation], they banned him from visiting her..[female concealment]."

In another narrative which presents a second version of how Majnūn meets Laylā, the beloved evades or eludes the poet-lover precisely once he begins to speak of her. In this version, Majnūn meets Laylā through an encounter with a group of women in which she is present. The narrative

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<sup>6</sup>Toril Moi, "Desire in Language: Andreas Capellanus and the Controversy of Courtly Love" in Medieval Literature: Criticism, Ideology & History, ed., David Aers (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) 24.

shows that it is amid the poet's linguistic performance that Laylā and the group of women turn away from him. The narrative states:

The reason for al-Majnūn's love for Laylā was that he set forth one day on a fine [*karīma*]she-camel of his, wearing a princely set of clothes. He passed by a woman from his tribe, known as Karīma, and with her was a group of women chattering and among them was Laylā. They [the women] were pleased by his beauty and perfection, so they invited him to dismount and converse. He dismounted and began to talk with them and he ordered a slave of his that was with him to slay for them his [al-Majnūn's] she-camel and he did so. He continued to converse with them for the remainder of the day. While he was so [doing], there appeared before them a young man, wearing a Bedouin garment, who was known as Munāzil, and [who] was driving some of his goats. When they saw him, they drew near to him and abandoned al-Majnūn. Thus, he became angry and departed from them reciting: (12-13)

*Do I slay my she-camel for the sake of Karīma,  
and then find that my arrival paved the way for the arrival of  
Munāzil?!*

*When he arrived, they tinkled their ornaments,  
yet when I came,  
I was not given the pleasure of those anklets' sound*

A variant of this last hemistich is as follows:

*When he arrived, they tinkled their ornaments,  
yet when I came, they concealed the sound of their anklets.<sup>7</sup>*

Another version of the entire anecdote relates:

There was a man from the Banū 'Āmir ibn 'Uqayl known as Qays ibn Mu'ad, and he was called al-Majnūn. He was a

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<sup>7</sup>This variant is related in the footnote on pg. 30 of the Aghānī text of the romance. Vol. 2.

master of ghazal and the company of women. [Once] he set out riding upon a she-camel of his, and passed by a woman from Banū 'Uqayl known as Karīma. She was beautiful and intelligent, and with her was a group of women. They recognized him and invited him to dismount and converse. He was wearing a pair of splendid mantles and a rounded Persian mantlehood. He dismounted and remained talking with them and reciting poetry to them. They seemed to be utterly delighted with him, and when that [aspect] of them pleased him, he slew his she-camel for them. They took it and roasted it and ate until evening arrived. Then, there appeared a handsome youth from their clan, and he sat with them. They turned their attention to him and said to him: How are you today Munāzil? When he [al-Majnūn] saw them do that, he became angry and arose and left them, reciting...[the same poem cited above] (29-30)

However the next morning, dressed in his best, he heads off seeking an engagement with the women again. Coming upon Laylā and her maidservants sitting in their courtyard, he is hailed by them with an invitation: "Are you [in the mood] to have a talk with one who is not being distracted from you by the likes of Munāzil?" (13) He assents and joins Laylā and her maidservants in conversation (again, mainly he is talking). During his conversation, Laylā kept turning away from him, again and again and conversing "with others hour after hour." Moreover, when a young man from the clan approaches the scene, "she invited him [near to her] and whispered to him a long secret" (*wa sarrathu sirāran ṭawīlan*).

Here, mainly speech (revelation) and silence (concealment) are involved in a complex interplay between female and male desire. A female gaze at the male poet as an object of desire twice results in invitations to

him to speak. Once he speaks, it is he who does nearly all the talking. Fedwa Malti-Douglas has discussed a form of narrative male-female encounter where "the woman may speak, but it is at the instigation of the man."<sup>8</sup> Here, we have an instance of a reverse cross-sexual interaction where the man speaks at the instigation of the women. In fact, the instigation occurs through a gaze, and a female one at that, precisely to allow the male to speak ceaselessly. Majnūn has to speak because, as noted earlier, it is his unceasing discourse or linguistic performance that engenders his desire and stakes his claim to be a lover in the first place.<sup>9</sup> The second quotation cited above demonstrates this quite clearly: "He dismounted and remained talking with them and reciting poetry to them. They seemed to be utterly delighted with him, and when that [aspect] of them pleased him, he slew his she-camel for them." Only through the eloquence of Majnūn's poetry and speech is both the women's desire for him and his desire for them articulated.

As soon as the poet experiences desire for the women, he sacrifices his she-camel for them. Again, here the wounding and slaughter of an animal functions as a corporeal metaphor for linguistic revelation. In other words, as soon as Majnūn's desire is conceived in and through language, it seeks revelation. Given the explicit links between the description of the she-camel as being '*karīma*' and Karīma the woman, the slaying of the animal (as a metaphor for linguistic revelation) enacts a symbolic effacement of the secret or female ideal represented by Karīma, the beautiful woman heading

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<sup>8</sup>Fedwa Malti-Douglas, Woman's Body, Woman's Word, Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 44.

<sup>9</sup>Moi, "Desire in Language," 24.

the group of women. Thus, if his desire is engendered by his language, it is also revealed through language. Male revelation, in turn, leads to the concealment of the female beloved.

It should be mentioned that both woman's words and her body are embraced in the dialectic of female secrecy and revelation. Women were to be kept secrets, but women also kept secrets. Female speech and body were equally important aspects in the idealization of woman in the medieval Arabic discourse on love. The romance repeatedly emphasizes how Laylā is veiled (concealment of body) once Majnūn publicizes her through his speech. Also, it should be noted that though female revelation accompanies female concealment, it is always the concealment of the female from the poet that is foregrounded. Just as in the narrative above, Laylā's concealment of words from the poet is simultaneous with her revelation of them to another man, in the romance, the veiling of Laylā from Majnūn seems coterminous with her unveiling (marriage) to another man. Also, in the act of how, during Majnūn's discourse, Laylā suddenly conceals words from him that she reveals to another man is clearly analagous to that of how, amid the poet's poetic recitation and slaughter of his she-camel for the group of women, they conceal the sound of their anklets from him and tinkle them for another man. The reference to the 'concealment of the sound of anklets' (notice the use of the verb *akhfā*, 'to hide' in the variant verse) and 'tinkling of ornaments' in Majnūn's verse is important. It may be interpreted literally and metaphorically. As a metaphor, it represents the secrecy and revelation of the words of women, for as we shall see shortly, symbolism of jewels and gems was often used to describe women's speech.

I believe this pattern of female concealment (whether it be women keeping secrets or women's bodily concealment) coupled with male revelation signifies her illusoriness and elusiveness as an object of desire. Hence, through a portrayal of how woman's speech and body is occulted from the poet whenever he expresses himself, the romance foregrounds the ideal for what it is—an ever vanishing male fantasy that eludes him precisely when he embodies it in speech. That she reveals herself to another man and not to the poet merely underscores her elusiveness and remoteness for the poet-lover. Laylā only becomes fully unattainable for Majnūn when she avails herself to another man.

Through this pattern of female secrecy linked with male revelation, the romance exemplifies a paradoxical aspect of the medieval Arabic discourse on love, an aspect that has been identified by R. Howard Bloch in his discussion of especially the medieval French love lyric: 'by giving expression to the love object (revelation), the poet-lover loses it.'<sup>10</sup> The shunning of Majnūn that is enacted precisely when he is celebrating his linguistic virtuosity signifies how male revelation (or linguistic expression) renders desire's object unattainable. Expression of desire results in the absence of desire's object. Only when the lover-poet is most actively giving expression to the object of his desire does this object elude him.

We begin to understand better why secrecy was posited as a cardinal tenet of true love. 'If there is no way of expressing desire, that is, no way of speaking or even thinking about the love object (for speech is a faculty of the intellect) that does not lead to its loss,' then, to paraphrase Bloch, 'an

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<sup>10</sup>Bloch, Medieval Misogyny, 153.

extreme form of discretion or secrecy was inevitable.<sup>11</sup> But just why is it that speech or the use of language results in the absence or disappearance of desire's object? What is the nature of the love object such that putting this object to expression results in its evanescence?

### The Perfection of Virginity<sup>12</sup>

We gain an insight into the nature of desire's object from Ibn Dawūd, who in his treatise on love entitled Kitāb al-Zahra, observes that the unfolding of desire encompasses "the hoping for what cannot be there and the desiring of what cannot be achieved...until this leads to madness..."<sup>13</sup> Through the clause "the hoping for what cannot be there," he clearly indicates that the object of desire is a fantasy, an abstraction or image. The romance's pattern of female secrecy and male revelation--which symbolizes this object's imperviousness to embodiment in speech--also demonstrates, as Bloch has argued with respect to medieval French courtly works, that the object is fundamentally an abstraction or that which is, by definition, unembodied. Yet, language paradoxically constructs the very ideal or abstraction that it itself then belies through expression. This paradox is best illustrated in Majnūn's own words concerning Laylā . In the following excerpt, the poet ostensibly informs a group of women who question him concerning his desire for Laylā that she is pure perfection:

They said: What pleases you about her? He said: Everything I have seen, witnessed, and heard about her has delighted me. By God, I

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 109.

<sup>12</sup>In this section, I am greatly indebted to Bloch's discussion in his chapter entitled "The Poetics of Virginity" in Medieval Misogyny.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Dawūd, Kitāb al-Zahra, 56.



have never seen a thing about her that was not beautiful in my sight and captivating to my heart. I have already tried [to find] something to be ugly or revolting or shameful about her, so that I may recover from her, but I never found it. They said to him: Describe her for us. Thus, he began to recite:

*Purest and whitest of whites as if she is a moon amid the cold night  
Of a comely countenance, indeed beauty is an occasion for jealousy  
Her tears display the glittering of an eye whose blackness disdains the  
blackness of collyrium*

*A tender girl, if gossip increases, she has recourse to the  
protection of modesty, and if she talks, she is moderate.(83)*

Descriptions of Laylā in language employing ethereal and celestial images abound throughout the romance. Another of Majnūn's verses using such an image is *I say to my companions, she is the sun, her glow is near yet distance lies in the acquisition of her.* (65). Whether she is imagined as the moon or sun, it is her elusiveness and unattainability that is foregrounded. Rendered as inaccessible, indifferent and inviolable, the beloved is constructed as one who shuns desire and one who does not desire, in other words, an impenetrable virgin.

This is an extremely important point: the perfection of the abstraction is the wholeness and purity of virginity. Hence, all the descriptions of the beloved's cruelty are designed to underscore precisely this aspect of the virgin: that her self-contained, unsullied nature as a virgin makes her indifferent and inaccessible; that as a virgin, she is the absence of desire, she is purity incarnated. As noted in Chapter Two, idealization of the chaste maiden, in Majnūn Laylā, verges on deification.

In the poem that follows Majnūn's tribute to his beloved's perfection, she is described as a tender and pure virgin, a white moon without a blemish. As a modest and unsullied virgin, she eschews embellishments and cosmetics--her eyes are not lined with collyrium. Virginity in these verses is linked with a lack of ornamentation whereas generally woman's body and speech, as I have already pointed out and will discuss later, is often described as ornamentation. The image of the beloved's eyes brimming with tears is the first smear to appear in the otherwise spotlessly virginal portrayal of the beloved. The tearing of eyes, I maintain, is a corporeal image that metaphorizes linguistic expression or revelation, and revelation, it must be remembered, is defilement, is unchastity. Though the effect of this image suggestive of revelation is somewhat undercut by the emphasis on the blackness of the beloved's eyes (given its connotations of secrecy), it is shored up by what follows at the end of the poem.

For whereas the narrative and the first half of this poem explicitly describe the beloved as an ideal and perfect virgin, the second half (especially the last verse) undercuts this image even while it ostensibly continues to adhere to it. Importantly, through the phrase *if she talks, she is moderate*, the poet establishes a link between speech (*kalām*) and the beloved, and this connection destroys the ideal itself, for when the ideal speaks, it vanishes. When the abstraction is embodied as speech, the abstraction disappears.

Furthermore, by merely mentioning that the beloved is a subject of gossip as well as by invoking the code of female modesty for her protection, in the last verse, the poet belies the very image of chaste maiden

that he fashions in the beginning of the poem. Though the lover implies that it is her beauty and perfection that have instigated this jealousy and gossip in the first place, the allusion to impropriety tarnishes her image.

### Language and the Virgin Deflowered

The romance of Majnūn Laylā, by constructing Majnūn's tragic error as a speech-act, foregrounds speech rather than action as the constituent element in tragedy. Unlike the Aristotelian conception of the tragic plot, in which action occupies pride of place, language, specifically poetic expression, is made central to this love story's pathos. The romance presents the declamation of the lover's verses and the ensuing problems of hermeneutics as the tragic errors that result in the impugment of beloved's chastity. By constructing poetry as the cause for the lover's loss of his beloved, the romance makes explicit about how linguistic expression destroys the object of desire, how linguistic revelation exposes and defiles the virgin beloved.

We learn about these pivotal verses in a most revealing scene (appearing at the end of the story) which consists of a visit by Qays ibn Dharīḥ (fellow 'Udhri love-poet) to Laylā, the beloved. Actually Qays ibn Dharīḥ originally visits Majnūn, whereupon he is asked by the latter to convey his greetings to Laylā. When Qays goes to see Laylā for this purpose and conveys Majnūn's regards, Laylā bursts out in anger. Again,

If I had known you were his messenger, I would not  
have welcomed you! Tell him from me: What about  
your saying,  
*A night, in the valley of al-Ghayl, O Umm Mālik,  
refused.*

*To give you, anything other than [except] a true love  
that does not lie...  
Indeed, you have caused an echo to resound, O  
Umm Mālik  
Which goes wherever the wind takes it.*

Tell me about this night of al-Ghayl, which night was it? Have I ever been alone with you in the Ghayl or elsewhere, day or night? (94)

In response to Laylā 's display of anger at Majnūn, Qays tries to defend his fellow poet and console her by asserting:

Indeed people have interpreted his verses in a manner not intended by him. Don't be like them. He [only] related that he saw you the night of the Ghayl Valley and you stole his heart. He did not mean you harm. (94)

The mere fact that Laylā and Qays here address questions concerning language suggests that perhaps this romance is an allegoresis of language.<sup>14</sup> Qays through his response indicates that he perceives the issue to be an incorrect interpretation of Majnūn's poetic language. Implicit in Laylā 's question is a concern over the connection between Majnūn's poetic speech and a perceived reality. Qays ibn Dharīh, whose voice carries interpretive authority in that he is a fellow-poet of Majnūn, suggests that what Majnūn intended to convey by his verses was totally contrary to the public's interpretation of them. What he intended to convey was simply that upon

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<sup>14</sup> Though the allegorical reference (to language as an instable system of signification) may not be continuous throughout the story, it is certainly intermittently present. Maureen Quilligan, "Allegory and Allegoresis, and the Deallegorization of Language," in *Allegory, Myth and Symbol*, edit. Morton W. Bloomfield (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 168.

merely seeing his beloved during a night in the valley, he “refused all” (in other words, insisted upon nothing) to his beloved except “a true love that does not lie.”

The fact that the romance foregrounds a misinterpretation of the poet's use of the word ‘night’ in his verse as the cause for the loss of his lady is significant. It is significant because the beloved's name means ‘night’ and the word itself is a metaphor for secrecy. By rendering the word ‘night’ as an embattled linguistic site, the romance makes explicit the unattainability of desire's object in language or the elusiveness of meaning in language. The lack of a stable semantics for the word ‘night’ in this verse represents the inability of the beloved as ideal to be embodied in expression. This inability results in the rupture of the love affair and unfulfillment of the lover's desire. But why is the beloved or Laylā shown speaking the lover's verses? It is as if the romance, to emphasize how speech has defiled the beloved, has the beloved speak the speech that defiled it, has the object of desire perform what was performed upon it. Yet, the fact that a speech act is foregrounded as the tragic act is more significant than the content of the speech or the identity of the speaker.

Both Laylā and Qays interpret the word ‘night’ literally. This is strange since the verse easily lends itself to a non-literal reading of this word, especially since ‘night’ is personified (“A night...refused”). Where Qays and Laylā differ is in their interpretations concerning the connection between a literal ‘night’ and the characters of the lovers. Indeed, this connection is open to multiple interpretations. If night is interpreted literally, its usage in connection with the poet-lover and his beloved could refer to a

night during which he dreamt about his beloved or a night during which he saw her in passing (as Qays argues), or a night during which he met with or visited her (as Laylā questions). Laylā and the public at large (i.e., *al-nās* referred to by Qays in his defense of Majnūn) obviously interpreted it to mean the lovers were physically together sometime during a night. But they went further. They not only selected this provocative interpretation out of many for this verse but also assumed it represented the poet's personal experience. They ascribed a reality to the verse which they then challenged. Thus, a combination of a 'vulgar misreading' of poetic tropes and misassumptions regarding the relation between poetic language and reality wreaked havoc on Laylā's reputation, as is evident from the intensity of her reaction.

Moreover, from the use of the word *khalā* by Laylā, it becomes evident that what was causing scandal was not just the lovers' physically being alone with each other but also of having had a secret and intimate verbal exchange. The verb *khalā*, means both 'to be alone' with and 'to speak in private with' someone. Semantically, this word acquires greater connotations of intimacy as a consequence of this connection between space and speech for to be spatially alone with someone is linked with speaking in private with the same party.<sup>15</sup>

By foregrounding this disjunction between literary and popular

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<sup>15</sup>"Closely allied with the question of *nazar* is the forbiddance of seclusion with a woman other than one's own. According to a number of *hadīths* cited in this connection, when a man and a woman are alone together, the third present is Satan. When the Prophet was asked, 'What if they are good people?' he replied, 'Even if they were the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist!'" Joseph Bell, *Love Theory*, 28.

interpretations of the said verses, the romance demonstrates a tension between Bedouin literary conventions (especially regarding love poetry) which dictated the use of tropological language, on the one hand, and social norms (of early Islamic society) that inevitably misread this language, on the other hand. This society judged poetic speech to be promiscuous, i.e., it took many meanings just as a harlot took many lovers. This promiscuous aspect of language, as exemplified in the verses, defiled the beloved's chastity.

Laylā 's challenging the veracity of Majnūn's verses (specifically regarding the representation of her virginity) suggests that she is not judging poetic expressions and revelations by criteria different from nonpoetic ones. She exhibits anger not over the very act of Majnūn's poetic declamation nor over its circulation, but rather over its veracity. But this epistemological issue of the truthful versus lying qualities of his poetic language is just a reformulation of the concept of how the love object as ideal or absolute can never be contained in linguistic expression. The issue of the veracity of Majnūn's speech as it pertains to Laylā 's virginity is no different from that of the very act of the poet's speech or revelation impugning her chastity. Through both of them, the romance dramatizes the concept of how it is expression itself that disallows any representation of a virgin ideal or truth in language.

The narrative and verses quoted above raise fundamental questions of literary meaning and interpretation, indeed, questions of meaning and interpretation as they relate to language in general. How is meaning (*ma'na*) to be defined and ascertained? What specifically is the meaning of

these verses? Is there a single, proper interpretation (*ta'wīl*) yielded by them, as Qays suggests? Also, what is the role of literal (*ḥaqīqī*) versus figurative (*majāzī*) language in this interpretation? What are the connections, to which Laylā draws attention, between poetic language and and 'reality'? At least two different and competing narrative voices, Laylā's voice and Qays' voice, are heard tentatively interpreting the couplet. Yet, the multivocality of the verses themselves belies the readings offered by either of these two parties.

An even more powerful demonstration of how this romance is about language occurs not through what is present in but rather what is absent from the above account. What is absent is Majnūn's own voice. In fact, not just in this account but throughout the entire romance, Majnūn, the purported composer and speaker of these slanderous verses, is never even shown acknowledging he composed them, let alone declaiming them or pronouncing any judgement on them. Why is this? One would think that in a story in which poetry and its interpretation are deemed the tragic errors that result in the poet's loss of his beloved, the connection between the poet and his slanderous verses would be well-established. If not shown declaiming them, at least, he himself would be depicted offering some justification for his words. This is not the case. In the romance, Majnūn is never shown recognizing that he lost Laylā because of poetry he uttered, or that he even composed these verses. It is only through the voices of other characters and narrators that we learn this.

The romance's omission of Majnūn's voice concerning these verses becomes more deserving of consideration when we review an account



in the love story of Kuthayyir 'Azzah that is both strikingly similar to and somewhat different from the one cited above. Significantly, in this account too, the beloved 'Azzah perceives her reputation to have been besmirched by poetry allegedly composed by her lover, Kuthayyir. Unlike the Majnūn Laylā romance, in which there is never any direct exchange between the lovers themselves regarding Majnūn's slanderous verses, this story portrays 'Azzah confronting the poet himself and declaiming the culprit verse to him.<sup>16</sup> Hence, it is the beloved, rather than the lover-poet, who is shown declaiming the defamatory verse in both love stories. Furthermore, after 'Azzah recites this verse, she poses a question almost identical to that framed by Laylā in the narrative quoted above: "Have I ever been alone with you in a tent or outside of a tent?" What is noteworthy is that Kuthayyir responds by denying that he ever uttered this verse.

Thus, Kuthayyir is shown disavowing and Majnūn is never shown avowing any connection to slanderous poetry responsible for the demise of their respective love affairs. Both stories, one by not establishing any direct connection between speaker and locution and the other by rendering that connection suspect, indicate that it is the locution itself rather than the speaker that matters. They further underscore this by having those for whom the verses were ostensibly intended, rather than the composers of the verses (whoever they are), declaim the verses. Actually, the aforementioned narrative from the Majnūn Laylā romance sets up an interesting triangle enclosing the text of the verses: composer (allegedly Majnūn),

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<sup>16</sup>"...at the time that I came to Umm 'Amr and [then] you rose to see to my business while the tent was empty. Kuthayyir 'Azza in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 9: 33.

transmitter/receiver (Laylā ), and interpreter (Qays). Through this construct, the romance may be foregrounding the multiple problems associated with origination, transmission, reception/circulation and interpretation of poetry in the medieval Arabic context.

Between the absence of a fixed authorship attributable to controversial verses in each love story and the absence of a stable, univocal meaning assignable to these verses lies an inescapable link. The composer's true voice, just like the verse's true meaning, is never ascertainable and knowable. Precisely because meaning is never fully attainable, both stories suggest that the issue of who originally expresses this meaning is irrelevant.<sup>17</sup> What is emphasized is that linguistic expression deflowers and absents that which ultimately it seeks to express (i.e., stable meaning, ideal) regardless of who engages in the expression. Thus, the romance's omission of Majnūn's voice concerning controversial poetry attributed to him represents the absence of a stable semantic base and a fixed referent in language.

Turning to the text of the verses, we see how the motifs of secrecy, disclosure and betrayal are at work. Here, the words 'night' and 'valley' (lowland, depressed region) connote secrecy and concealment and in a case of reverse attribution (given that Laylā means night), the poet associates the word 'night' with himself. His being linked with metaphors of secrecy when otherwise he incarnates expression or revelation in the romance is incongruous. Secrecy refuses to yield anything save a concealed and chaste

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<sup>17</sup>The whole issue of Majnūn's fictionality and al-Jāhiz's comments (recorded in the story itself) on Majnūn's status as *majhūl al-qā'il* support this idea of the anonymity of speaker.

love, in other words, Majnūn refuses all but a “true love that does not lie” to his beloved. However, the poet merely invokes this “true love.” What he says is that she was refused something less or other than such a true love: “a night refused ....to give you anything except a true love.” The refusal is very important because it implies that someone sought and was refused something [unless it is interpreted rhetorically]. The reference to the beloved being refused implies that the party who did the refusing was Majnūn. But who did the seeking?

Certainly, by portraying himself as the refuser, Majnūn seems to implicate the beloved as the seeker. He implies that what was sought by the beloved was a love less than honorable and that he, the chaste lover, refused such a request. In effect, he reveals the love by ostensibly not revealing it. Even while Majnūn rhetorically idealizes the beloved's virginity and honor by deeming her worthy of only a chaste and true love, he actually portrays her as indiscreet and unchaste. He thus betrays the very ideal (his virgin beloved) and tenets of ‘Udhri love to which he so finely alludes. It could be argued that perhaps the seeker was the poet himself; he refused himself in an internal struggle in which he desired a love less than honorable (*ghayr ḥubb ṣadīq*) with his beloved. Yet, the second hemistich seems to support an interpretation of the beloved being the seeker; it contains an allusion to the oncoming scandal. The beloved (like the verses about her) has caused an echo to resound and the wind (like gossip) causes the continuing reverberations of the echo. Laylā 's name is everywhere, its echo is to be heard everywhere.

Thus, we see how expression transgresses or betrays the abstraction of

a virgin and unadulterated beloved. If, as Bloch argues, speech, and even thought, about virginity as the ideal mar this ideal, then what is required is that one be freed or absented from perception altogether. It is this flight from perception that is represented by the extreme form of discretion or the obsession with secrecy in the medieval Arabic discourse on love. Not being absented from perception means a betrayal of the idea as absolute but also "of univocal meaning, a presence or plenitude in language."<sup>18</sup>

### Desire and Absence

Even while Majnūn incarnates speech that exposes the fiction of the love object, he also represents desire's fixation upon an ideal and meaning in language that is ever absent. If language destroys or defiles the love object through expression, if the love object is such that it cannot be embodied in language, then desire's fulfillment is never realizable within language. And if desire is engendered by language, then the object of desire signifies a perfection or plenitude that is forever sought but never found in language. In fact, the expression of male desire absents the female object of desire because this desire is anchored to the absence of the female in the first place. In the romance, the lover himself acknowledges this when he recites: *Why, you madman, have you lost your heart for one for whose attainment you have no hope* (37). As R. Howard Bloch demonstrates in his analysis of the medieval French love lyric, 'the object must be absent for desire to be fixed on it.'<sup>19</sup> The passage below, cited earlier, consists of a

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<sup>18</sup>Bloch, Medieval Misogyny, 137.

<sup>19</sup>Among other lyrics, Bloch discusses the verses of Bernart de Ventadorn, Raimbaut d'Orange, and Thibaut de Champagne. *Ibid.*, 153.

third version of how Majnūn falls in love with Laylā. In it, we note that love was kindled in him through his remoteness from rather than proximity to her. This version of how the affair between them begins relates that

Al-Majnūn was addicted to the conversation of women and enamored of them. News of her [Laylā] reached him and she was described to him (*nu'itar lahu*). Then he fell in love with her and resolved to visit her. (44)

It is with the inaccessibility of woman as sign, exemplified in the arrival by distant means of "news about Laylā," that the poet falls in love. "When desire, in other words, does not enter by the gaze [or by hearing women's words], it arrives in the form of hearsay."<sup>20</sup> This engendering of desire by rumour or hearsay, a topos in the medieval Arabic discourse on love, underscores how male desire is predicated upon the absence of the lady. Not only is she a linguistic abstraction, i.e., descriptive speech, an image or trope, but she is also an abstraction by virtue of her remoteness and absence.

Language's role in the production of desire is not just tropological but also circulatory. The above passage shows that Majnūn's desire for Laylā is also engendered through her being verbally imaged or linguistically constructed by another party. Again, it should be noted that this imaging of her by a third party is founded upon her absence. The narrative does not reveal the gender of the person(s) performing the speech act describing Laylā but if it occurred between men, it could be interpreted as additional evidence for how language, (homosocial) desire, and jealousy are so closely intertwined in the romance. Just as hearing another man cry out his

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 154. It seems that "love by hearsay" may be a topos in the medieval French love lyric too. See Bloch's endnote no. 23 on p. 250.

beloved's name "Laylā " excites Majnūn's desire (and jealousy) in the romance, his hearing another man's speech about Laylā both provokes his desire for her and his jealousy of other rivals. Majnūn falls in love with Laylā through dissemination of speech about her and likewise, the dissemination of his own speech (poetry) about her also advertises her, situates her in a system of circulation that embraces the sexual. In Aḥmad Shawqī's modern adaptation of this romance to drama, the man who marries Laylā falls in love with her upon hearing Majnūn's poetry about her.<sup>21</sup> Thus, this ongoing circulation of the sign of woman based upon her absence, prolongs and enhances her desirability (and undermines it as well).

In the above passage's first sentence, we note that the mention of Majnūn's fondness for women is syntactically preceded by and linked to his infatuation with their conversation. Another narrative describes him as a "master of amorous verse (*ghazal*) and the society of women." (44) He is portrayed as a man who takes as much pleasure in serenading women with his words as he does in listening to their words. The question arises, what do women's words or discourse (*ḥadīth*) signify? The passage sets up a parallelism between words of women (conversation of women) and words about women (hearsay, news, or descriptive speech about women) by ascribing to both forms of language a role in the genesis of male desire. The speech of women is equated with poetic description (*wasf*). In consonance with this, I would maintain that basically women's words or speech reflects poetic speech. Women's speech mirrors Majnūn's own speech which is why he is so fond of hearing their words. If it can be argued that the male gaze

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<sup>21</sup>Aḥmad Shawkī, Majnūn Laylā, trans. by A. J. Arberry (London: Luzac & Co., 1933) 47.

“is not upon woman so much as on the reflection of the man in her eyes,”<sup>22</sup> likewise, it may be asserted that the male poet's listening is not so much hearing woman's speech as hearing his own words in her language. His listening to her words, like his gazing at her image, is ultimately a self-referential activity. There can never be a proximity to the beloved because, as noted earlier, it is upon her absence that the lover's desire is affixed.

There is another sense in which women's words signify absence and hence, are rendered similar to poetry. To explain this, we initially turn to a chapter devoted to “the discourse of women” in Ibn Qutayba's ‘Uyūn al-Akḥbār, in which he presents an abundance of very romanticized tropes to describe women's words: they are like “honeyed wine,” “a flow of a cloud,” “a string of pearls, unloosed and scattered,” “flowers in verdant meadows” “the glitter of gold and silver.”<sup>23</sup> We may infer that for Majnūn too, Laylā's words are like honeyed wine for his verses describe how he finds her mouth sweet and intoxicating and how he takes pleasure from “the refreshing coldness” of her teeth (32): *As if there were wine on her teeth...mingled with dew from night's close.*

Women's words, like their bodies, are objectified as ornaments of seduction and deceptive allurements. The analogy between their words and ornaments is important. This analogy suggests how, by making signification ascribed to women's words suspect and ambiguous, their language is rendered enigmatic and secretive. One of the aforementioned metaphors describes their language as “a string of pearls, unloosed and scattered.” This metaphor is a play upon that often employed by medieval Arab critics to

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<sup>22</sup>Bloch, 149.

<sup>23</sup>Ibn Qutaybah, ‘Uyūn al-Akḥbār, 4:81-84.

describe poetry ("a string of pearls"). The constitutive element of "a pearl" refers to each formal and semantic unit in a poem (i.e., each verse). Though this play upon an oft-quoted metaphor describing poetry foregrounds the difference between female and (male) poetic forms of speech-- that is, whereas male poetic language consists of lustrous language threaded to form an aesthetically coherent sequence, women's language is perceived as being lustrous but aesthetically and semantically disconnected and incoherent-- what I want to emphasize is that the standard metaphor and its variation respectively describe male poetic speech and women's language in terms of their multiplicity of semantic units. Both poetry and women's speech are metaphorized as a cluster of multiple pearls, despite the implication that in the latter, the pearls are in disarray. In the Qur'ān, too, woman is described as "one who is reared among ornaments and, in a quarrel, lacks clarity."<sup>24</sup> Again, the imputation of ambiguity, deceptiveness as well as frivolity to women's speech makes their discourse culpable for its lack of manifest, stable meanings. Woman's language, like woman herself, is perceived as being superfluous, artificial and ornamental precisely because it lacks a clear and fixed semantic matrix (woman lacks an essence). If according to the medieval Christian tradition, women's speech is garrulity,<sup>25</sup> the medieval Islamic tradition views her speech as equivocal. Poetry too, according to Islamic orthodoxy, was considered to be an equivocal discourse and one lacking a true meaning--a point to be elaborated upon in

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<sup>24</sup>Qur'ānic 43:18: "...*man yunashsha' u fī al-ḥilyati wahwa fī al-khiṣām ghayru mubīn.*" Cited in Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, Sexuality in Islam, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985) 88.

<sup>25</sup>Bloch, Medieval Misogyny, 15.



the next chapter.

In the romance, the best example of how Laylā 's speech mirrors that of the poet consists of her declamation of his defamatory verses.<sup>26</sup> The romance literally has Laylā mimic his words and moreover, presents the verses' ambiguity in meaning and interpretation as a major problem.

Another example consists of the two couplets cited below. These verses of Laylā are also her secrets because she recites them to Majnūn when they are alone. Interestingly enough, after having concealed a secret from him (as depicted in one of the earlier narratives) and thereby having elicited revelation of his secret, Laylā now discloses secrets to Majnūn. Here we have what seems to be an exception to the pattern of Laylā 's concealment from Majnūn that was discussed earlier; but, as we shall see, even in her revelation to him she is concealing from him because the verses are also about secrets. The romance presents two versions of her recitation. The first couplet is:

*Both of us appear in front of people  
to hate each other,  
and yet each is steadfast with his friend  
Our eyes tell us what we desire  
and in our hearts beats a latent love. (14)*

The other version of this couplet is:

*Both of us appear in front of people  
to hate each other  
and yet each is entrenched with his friend  
The secrets of the glancer are not hidden*

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<sup>26</sup>Maureen Quilligan observes that "in allegory...the words any given character speaks are controlled at least in part by the word that character is..." Hence, the very words that Laylā is shown as declaiming foreground the obscurity and ambiguity that her character and name personify. Quilligan, "Allegory," 169.

*when the eyes disclose what they conceal*  
(16)

These verses are concerned with the tension between suppression and expression of language in the unfolding of desire. A pretense of antipathy is juxtaposed against an inner love but the verses show how this posture of hatred toward each other (concealment) that Laylā desires is constantly being undercut by the sign language of the eyes (revelation). Each couplet is concerned with what is shown and hidden, revealed and concealed. The eyes and the heart play a role in this dialectic. The heart is a secret that conceals while the eyes are a means of disclosure. Both couplets are replete with the vocabulary of secrecy and revelation, especially the verbs *zahara*, *ballagha*, *akhfā*, *nataqa*. It is of the male lover's desire primarily that the beloved's poetry speaks, for he is the glancer.

Here again, the romance rehearses for us how the body (eyes) functions as a metaphor for language: the imaging (secreting) and conveying (revealing) of the lover's desire that occurs through the eyes metaphorizes language's capacity for constituting and conducting desire. Majnūn's glances at Laylā generate desire in him yet his eyes also betray to others his infatuation for her. As observed in the beginning of this chapter, language and the gaze are both causes and stages of the love-quest. In the medieval Arabic discourse on love, the glance (*lahza*) could actually be interpreted as a metaphor for word or expression (*lafza*). Both words and glances have the same function in that they generate desirable images in the mind. Likewise, in the articulation of desire, the "hinting with the glances of the eyes" is a fully developed sign language, with each minute movement

of the eye conveying a distinct message.<sup>27</sup> Here, Majnūn's tragic error is the revelation of secrets through his eyes. It is not the role of glances in imaging the beloved that is decried so much as their being instruments of disclosure.<sup>28</sup>

Laylā's secret recitation to Majnūn, in turn, provokes an even more public display from him. Again, we have two different accounts of his reaction and I will relate both. In one narrative, it is related that "when he heard these verses, he moaned violently and fell into a swoon. He remained thus for a while and they splashed water on his face until he regained consciousness." (14) In the other narrative, it is written that: "he fainted and then he arose having lost his mind. [And then] he began to wear not a garment except rags and to walk only naked..." (16) Here, the loss of control over senses, body, mind, all function as metaphors for revelation of desire. He blatantly, publicly, displays his desire or secret. Majnūn's rapturous loss of control (that is, moaning, fainting, losing his mind) is rather climactic--a *petit-mort* in the sexual sense.<sup>29</sup> And so we are not surprised to find the symbolism of his nudity. The public revelation of secret sentiments is equivalent to the exposure of the body. Majnūn, here, is depicted revealing his secrets both as desire and as sexual body.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibn Ḥazm, The Ring of the Dove: A Treatise on the Art and Practice of Arab Love, trans. A. J. Arberry (London: Luzac & Company, Ltd., 1953) 68.

<sup>28</sup>Ibn Dawūd, for example, considers looking legitimate, though in his treatise, he does have a chapter titled "One who increases his glances, prolongs his sorrows." Ibn Dawūd, Kitāb al-Zahra, 42-44.

<sup>29</sup>M. Manzalaoui has pointed out that in a later collection of stories, Alf Layla wa Layla, "the mutuality of the simultaneous faint is the sentimental romance's surrogate for sexual intercourse..." Manzalaoui, "Swooning lovers," 75.

Another fine illustration of Majnūn's revelation is etched in a narrative describing a visit by him to Laylā's encampment (initially, he goes there to borrow some foodstuff). Laylā is instructed by her father to give Majnūn some butter: "She began to pour the butter in [the vessel] while we conversed. The conversation distracted us while she poured the butter, [so that] the vessel overflowed and neither of us was aware of it." (31-32) Here, the connection between the flow of butter and the flow of conversation is unmistakable—again, the flow of a fluid acts as a metaphor for the kinetics of the body. The flowing of butter, like the flowing of tears, is a kinetic metaphor for linguistic expression or revelation of desire. The very semantics of the root for the word *sabba* contain this metaphor, for besides meaning 'to pour, to flow,' it also means 'to love another one,' and *sabbun* means both 'pouring of a liquid and loving.'

The second-half of this narrative, which parallels the first part, constructs a scene in which fire and the nudity of the lover's body act as metaphors for revelation in language. The excerpt of the anecdote is:

[Majnūn] said: I arrived at [Laylā's father's home] a second night seeking fire while wrapped in a cloak of mine. She [Laylā] brought out fire in a rag for me and gave it to me and we stood there conversing. When the rag burned out, I tore a piece from of my cloak and lit it instead. When this burned out, I tore another [from my cloak] and kindled the fire with it [and this continued] until there did not remain [anything] of the cloak on me save what concealed my genitals. I had no sense of what I was doing. (31-32)

Night and light, female secrecy and male revelation, are made very prominent in this scene. The exchange of words (language) between the

lovers is made simultaneous with the burning of fire as well as with the denuding of the male lover's body.<sup>30</sup> Burning of fire and baring of body here act as metaphors for linguistic expression. Eventually Majnūn is left naked save what covers his sexual organs. The fact that only the latter remain concealed just underscores or further draws attention to his nudity. But again, his indiscretion, that is, his self-revelation and loss of control, ultimately expose and destroy female secrecy. Laylā is both the spark that ignites his desire and the night that is unveiled by his passion.

The more absent, occulted and elusive the female ideal, the more prominent and intense is the lover's desire for this ideal. If male expression results in the loss of the love object, this loss or absence of the beloved merely intensifies and perpetuates male desire and its revelation. When the object is concealed, when Laylā's words or body are veiled, the revelation of Majnūn's desire increases. The unavailability and inaccessibility of the love object merely increases its desirability in the eyes of the lover. In the narrative concerning his meeting with a group of women, their turning away from him and toward another man prompts his angry departure which is followed by recitation of verses expressing a sense of betrayal. When Laylā conceals a secret from him by whispering it to another man, the narrative relates how Majnūn registers great shock and jealousy on his countenance. His revelation is depicted in the romance through speech and

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<sup>30</sup>The classical Urdu poet Sauda has a verse that is relevant to this anecdote: *Ādam kā jīsam jab ke anāṣīr say mil banā, kuch āgh bachī rahī thī so āshiq kā dīl banā.*

(When the body of Adam was created from the elements, some fire was left over; thus the heart of the lover was made!) Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān Barker, Shāh Abdus Salām, et. al., *Naqsh-i-Dilpazīr*, 3 volumes (New York: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1977) 1:111:68.

body language. His body becomes a metaphor for revelation just as the veiling of Laylā's body metaphorizes concealment.

In conclusion, we note once again that there existed a distinct paradox in the medieval Arabic discourse on love: desire was defined as both the concealment and manifestation of certain signs and symptoms.<sup>31</sup> Desire consisted of the suppression of that which was defined as expression and the expression of that which was defined as suppression. Ibn Ḥazm, writer of the famous medieval love treatise, The Ring of the Dove, shows his awareness of this paradox when he begins a chapter entitled "Of Concealing the Secret" with the following declaration:

One of the attributes of Love is holding the tongue [*al-kirmān bil-lisān*]; the lover will deny everything if interrogated, affect a great show of fortitude, and make it appear that he is extremely continent and a confirmed bachelor. For all that, the subtle secret will out [the subtle secret refuses - *ya' bī al-sirru al-daqlq*]. The flames of passion raging in his breast will be glimpsed in his gestures and in the expression of his eyes; they will creep slowly but surely out into the open, like fire among coals or water through dry clay. It is possible in the early stages to delude those lacking in finer sensibility; once Love has firmly established itself, however, that is entirely out of the question.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Andras Hamori, in his chapter entitled "Love Poetry (Ghazal)" observes: "As with so much European love-poetry...the basic mode of 'Abbasid love poetry is paradox." A. Hamori, "Love Poetry (Ghazal)," The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, 'Abbasid Belles-Lettres, 212. In discussing the love poetry of the courtly al-'Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf, Hamori alludes to the dialectic of secrecy and revelation characterizing his verse: "The secret no doubt has social realities behind it, but it is also an element in the rhetoric of paradox in love poetry; providing for contrast between inside and outside, feeling and behaviour." Ibid., 213-214.

<sup>32</sup>Ibn Ḥazm, Tauq al-Hamāmah, 60.

According to Ibn Ḥazm, a trait of true love or desire is the lover's suppression of language or speech, that is, the concealment of the secret. Thus, the paradox's description may be reworded: in the medieval Arabic discourse on love, desire consisted of both the suppression and expression of language. Certainly, if the secret consists of suppression of speech, then revelation must consist of expression through speech. Yet Ibn Ḥazm defines revelation (another of desire's characteristics) as the expression of the lover's body language (expressions of eyes and body, *zuhūran fīl-ḥarakāt wal-'ayn*). Here, just as in the romance of Majnūn Laylā, corporeal imagery functions as a metaphor for linguistic expression. Just as the corporeal image of "holding the tongue" (*kitmān bil-lisān*) metaphorizes suppression of speech, the "gestures and [movements of] the eyes" represent expression or speech. Also, the kinetics of natural phenomena act as a metaphor for the kinetics of the body, and thereby, also metaphorize expression. The kinetic images of two of the four natural elements—burning flames, flowing water—symbolize the disorder of the four bodily humours caused by the rise of desire.<sup>33</sup>

Ibn Ḥazm, through certain grammatical and rhetorical devices in this

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<sup>33</sup>The preponderance of this kind of imagery concerning the turbulence of the natural elements to express the upheaval of bodily humours attests to the presence of Galenic influences in medieval Arabic love theory. The etymological links between 'secretions' and 'secrets' are also interesting in this regard. Sissela Bok, in his study of secrecy, states that "Alfred Gross went so far as to ask 'whether there is not in our subconscious a complete identity between the secret on the one hand, and bodily excretions (respectively the organs of secretion) on the other.'" Sissela Bok, Secrets: On the Ethics of Concealment and Revelation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) 32.

paragraph, seems to undercut the validity of the lover's enterprise of concealing the secret.<sup>34</sup> First, by grammatically making the word *sirr* an active subject such that the secret takes on a life of its own, he indicates the inevitability of revelation or the secret's escape—it refuses to be suppressed and 'outs itself.' While the lover's desire is still in its infancy, he may voluntarily and intentionally conceal his secret, however with desire's growth, revelation is inevitable. In other words, ultimately, the lover cannot absent himself from language or expression, try as he may in the beginning. Second, through the syntactic association of linguistic secrecy with other pretenses or simulations, e.g., the lover's feigning perseverance and his pretense of being an abstemious bachelor, Ibn Hazm implies that the lover's non-expression is also a highly contrived and therefore, unnatural act. As importantly, by syntactically linking suppression of speech with continency and chastity, he indicates that linguistic expression or revelation is identified with non-chastity.

Hence, if revelation is naturalized and constructed as an inevitability and furthermore, if revelation renders the lover's desire non-chaste, then true love or a secret, chaste love becomes an impossibility. This conundrum and Ibn Hazm's contradictory position (i.e., positing secrecy as a trait of desire and then demonstrating its untenability) are merely different expressions of the aforementioned paradox. I have chosen to cite material

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<sup>34</sup>Freud also believed the secret was irrepressible: "He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his finger-tips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore. And thus the task of making conscious the most hidden recesses of the mind is one which it is quite possible to accomplish." Sigmund Freud, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth) Vol. VII, 77.



from Ibn Ḥazm's treatise on love only because, it seems to me, he more than other love theorists was aware of this paradox of desire. However, the entire meta-discourse on love in the medieval period, including love poetry and romances such as Majnūn Laylā, is characterized by this paradox. What is most significant, in my view, is that language, or linguistic expression to be more precise, is made a culprit. Linguistic expression or revelation, deemed an attribute of desire, was also considered anathema to desire. Perhaps the above paragraph does not demonstrate this so clearly, however the tenth-century romance of Majnūn Laylā, in constructing Majnūn's tragic error to be a speech-act, certainly foregrounds this theme.

A thorough response to the question of how and why speech or language is represented as error in the medieval Arabic discourse on love is beyond the scope of this dissertation. But the paradox referred to earlier is integrally related to the issue of the tragic in the romance of Majnūn Laylā. In fact, this paradox is what constitutes the tragic in this romance.

The Majnūn Laylā romance demonstrates how an error of language became a paradox within the conception of desire in the medieval Arabic discourse on love. According to this discourse, the tragic error of language lay in its capacity for both conceiving (secreting) and conveying (revealing) desire. In other words, the error of language was that it conceived desire and then inevitably rendered desire in pursuit of (expression, revelation) an ever elusive satisfaction. Desire conceived in and through language was not desire until it was set to expression. In part, the tragic inhered in desire's inability to remain hidden, in desire's expression in and through language, and the concomitant revelation of that which was specific to desire's object

as secret.

The medieval Arabic discourse on love unsuccessfully attempted to address this error of language by positing a true love to be one that was, in a sense, exempted from language. As Majnūn Laylā and the other 'Udhri love stories depict, an unchaste love was one put to expression, which came to be defined as revelation. True love or a secret love basically consisted of the occlusion of desire from speech or language. True love was to be unspoken, unarticulated (a secret) in order to exist. Since concealment or secrecy was primarily linked with the genesis of desire, the medieval Arabic discourse on love, by positing secrecy as a cardinal tenet of true love, implied that the only true love was a puerile love, a love still in its infancy.

Importantly, the paradox was that if language and desire were inextricably linked, how could desire be occluded from language? The tragic error of language thus became an anomaly of desire: if desire was constituted by language, then how could it resist expression? Nonetheless, medieval courtly ideology deemed the validity of this love to be desire's suppression. In order to exist, true love was to be kept a secret.

## Chapter 5: The Significance of *Huyām*

In this chapter, I want to examine further the importance of language in the medieval romance of Majnūn Laylā through an analysis of the metaphor of *huyām* or “errancy” in the story.<sup>1</sup> The etymologies of the Arabic word *hāma* and the English word “errant,” reveal an important connection between love<sup>2</sup> and wandering. I will argue that this concept of wandering (inscribed in the etymology of *huyām*) acts as a spatial metaphor for the errors of language. These errors were conceived of in two different senses. In tenth-century romances like Majnūn Layla, the ambivalence toward language was expressed through an interweaving of two different ideologies: one that was courtly and tragic versus another that was highly didactic and ethical. This ambivalence permeates all aspects of the romance genre’s construction and readings. The importance of *hāma* and its derivations, employed throughout the Majnūn Laylā romance, has gone unremarked by scholars who have examined the story. This connection

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<sup>1</sup>I will be using the words *huyām* and “errancy” interchangeably because there exist striking semantic correspondences between the word groups of *hāma* and its derivations, on the one hand, and the Latin-based “errant/error,” on the other hand. Actually, the Arabic expression *hāma* (or *hā’im*) ‘*ala wajhihi* is translated into English as the word “errant.” Munir Ba’albaki, Al-Mawrid, A Modern English-Arabic Dictionary (Beirut: Dar El-Ilm Lil-Malayēn, 1987). Also, see “erratum” in Magdi Wahba, A Dictionary of Literary Terms: English--French--Arabic (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1974). Though a topic apart from that addressed in this chapter, it is interesting to note the extent to which the concept of the “errant” in medieval European romance, parallels that of *huyām* in medieval Arabic romance. In European conceptions of the genre of romance, the knight-errant was the romancer who travelled and erred in his quest.

<sup>2</sup>These Arabic words are frequently translated as “love,” but I think that a more accurate English translation is “desire.”

between desire and wandering that characterizes the etymology of the word *hāma* can also be viewed as a distillation of the romance genre in the medieval Arabic context. In this respect, the frequent use of the word *hāma* in the love story of Majnūn Laylā “reveals the capacity of romance to generate metaphors for its own description.”<sup>3</sup>

### Etymology of *Hāma*/Errant

The Arabic word *hāma*, from which *huyām* is derived, means “to love someone desperately,” and “to roam, rove and wander.” The expression *hāma ‘ala wajhihi*, also derived from this word, is translated as “out of love, he wandered like a madman; he wandered aimlessly.”<sup>4</sup> By definition, *huyām* is the last stage of love and the most excessive of the excessive degrees of love in medieval Arabic love theory.<sup>5</sup> All the other prior phases of love are subsumed in this ultimate stage and to understand the degree of its incoherence, one has to note the excessiveness already of that which precedes it. Among the degrees of love prior to *huyām* are *tatayyum* (a state of enslavement to love) and *walah* (distraction or loss of reason in love).

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<sup>3</sup>I am indebted to Patricia Parker’s discussion of “errancy” in her work entitled Inescapable Romance for the conceptual model used in this chapter. Patricia Parker, Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979) 7. André Miquel and Percy Kemp, in their book Majnūn et Laylā: l’amour fou, also discuss the motif *l’errance*. They examine its connections with another important motif— the motif of *la sauvagerie* in the romance. André Miquel and Percy Kemp, Majnūn et Laylā: l’amour fou, (Paris: Éditions Sindbad, 1984).

<sup>4</sup>Lane’s Lexicon, s.v., “hubb.” *Tayyama* means ‘to be enslaved in love’ as well as ‘to be lost or astray.’

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

As noted already, the etymology of the word “errant,” too, demonstrates this link between passionate love and errant movement (at least up until the fifteenth century). The English “errant” taken from French derives from two Latin roots: *itin(erare)*, meaning to journey or travel and *errare*, meaning to wander, stray or err. The word “error” derived from the Latin root *errare* means among other things, “the action of roaming or a wandering; hence...a roving...” and “...a wandering of the feelings; an extravagance of passion.”<sup>6</sup> Here again, spatial errancy is linked to a kinetics of passion. The absence of an internal coherence and a wandering of desire within the body leads to a wandering of the body as well as to other kinds of errancies. “Error” also means “...a mistake; e.g. in calculation, judgement, speech, writing, action,” as well as “a departure from moral rectitude; a transgression, a wrong-doing.”

### Hamartia and the Symbolic Ambivalence of *Huṣyām*

The meaning of the word “error,” as “...a mistake; e.g. in calculation, judgement...” suggests an ambivalence (“mistake” as either something excusable or culpable) which draws our attention to the possible overlap between the roles of “tragic error” in tragedy and “errancy” in romance. As something excusable, the Majnūn Laylā romance’s *itin(erant)*<sup>7</sup> poet-lover is

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<sup>6</sup>Oxford English Dictionary. The latter meaning “...a wandering of the feelings....” appears to be no longer used, as the last example cited of its usage is in 1460.

<sup>7</sup>I cannot refer to Majnūn as a ‘knight-errant’ because of the set of connotations that so strongly links this term to medieval European society and courtly literature. However, I would like to thank my colleague Joe Lowry for coining a play of the word ‘itinerant.’ Use of this term, *itin(erant)*, enables me to emphasize the errancy of Majnūn’s character.

guilty of *hamartia*. Tragic error is a mistake in judgement and “tragedy concerns...[those] who come to grief ‘not through defect of character and wickedness,’ but through some ‘missing-the-mark.’”<sup>8</sup> Aristotle’s dictum that the tragic hero “is neither a paragon of virtue and justice nor undergoes the change to misfortune through any real badness or wickedness but because of some mistake,”<sup>9</sup> “combines two discordant elements: an overall goodness of character (though not a virtuous character) and proness toward error without reconciling them; it thus suggests an element of paradox which seems essential to tragedy.”<sup>10</sup>

This paradox of tragedy is present not just in the characterization of Majnūn but also in the readers’ response to his plight. As discussed in Chapter Two, reader reception that conceives of a work as tragic does not ally itself against or for the protagonist. Often, tragedy generates a curious mixture of sympathy and criticism from the audience, a mixture that does not slide into either complete condemnation or approbation. Yet, a moral component is ineluctably present in the construction of the character’s erring and the tragically-oriented reading of this error. When this component is strongly emphasized, “error” becomes something blameable and the interpretation or reception can no longer be characterized as tragic.

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<sup>8</sup>“They [insights] can also be used to increase our understanding of tragic *hamartia*, or missing-the-mark....Tragedy concerns good people who come to grief ‘not through defect of character and wickedness, but through some *hamartia*.’ *Hamartia* and *hamartema* are sharply distinguished from flaw or defect of character, both here and elsewhere.” Martha C. Nussbaum, The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1986) 382.

<sup>9</sup> Aristotle Poetics, transl. Gerald F. Else (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1970) 38.

<sup>10</sup>Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics, s.v. “*Hamartia*.”

The more didactic the response, the more vice is emphasized, the less tragic the figure. The *huyām*/errancy of Majnūn is symbolically ambivalent in the romance and invites several interpretations. He is, on the one hand, a tragically itin(erant) poet-lover and on the other hand, according to an ethical reading, Majnūn is a sinfully itin(erant) poet-lover. The romance offers its readers two paths to follow, two readings, and "the possibility of both these readings, or the tension between them, is probably more revealing than either reading by itself."<sup>11</sup>

Huyām and the Qur'an: *"And as for the poets --it is the erring ones who follow them."*

Implicit in the etymological and semantic link between between desperate love and errant movement (*huyām*) is a view that conceives of the geographical wandering of the (male) body as representing, on an external level, the physiological/psychic wandering within the body or the internal dissolution of boundaries and destruction of coherence.<sup>12</sup> Initially, desire unfolds as a disorder of the bodily humours that leads to mental disturbance. "Desire which is born in the heart...[leads to] the burning of blood and the inflammation of yellow bile and its transformation into black bile. From the stirring of the bile, [comes] the disorder of thought. With disorder of thought, there occurs the dullness of the intellect and damage to the mind as well as the hoping for what cannot be and the desiring of

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<sup>11</sup> Parker, *Inescapable Romance*, 17.

<sup>12</sup>In fact, here the spatial wandering of the body is connected to the Neo-Platonic idea of love as a state that is a remedy for the cosmological errancy of lovers' souls. See Ibn Ḥazm for the very definition of 'love' as a "conjunction" between 'scattered, roaming, errant souls.' Ibn Ḥazm, *The Ring*, 23.

cannot be achieved..until this leads to madness..."<sup>13</sup> Mental disorientation is spatially metaphorized as geographical disorientation -- an aimless and endless roaming of the body on land. As will be seen, the "hoping for what cannot be [fantasy] and the desiring of what cannot be achieved [wandering of desire or the postponement of desire's fulfillment]," are very significant aspects of *huyām*. In sum, then, *huyām* as wandering may be viewed as a spatial metaphor for the vagrancies within the body and mind.

As noted earlier, this idea of wandering contained in the etymology of *huyām* also acts as a spatial metaphor for the errors of language. Thus, the wanderings internal and external to the body also serve as metaphors for the errancy of language. The errors of desire become those of language since the engendering of desire is a discursive phenomenon. Incidentally, a perusal of the etymologies of many Arabic words connected with language/speech contain meanings that suggest that language is somehow deviant, injurious and invasive.<sup>14</sup> But what are the errors of language?

To probe the Islamic morally didactic understanding of language's errors as well as to suggest, by contrast, what the courtly view of them was, we turn to a famous Qur'anic verse in which the use of the verb *hāma* acts as a spatial metaphor for linguistic errors. The verse also bears many resonances with the persona of Majnūn in this romance. In the Chapter of the Poets, God declares:

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<sup>13</sup>Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-Zahra*, 56.

<sup>14</sup>See how the etymology of the word *lughah* (language) foregrounds meanings such as 'nonsense, mistake, slips of language, erroneous speech.' Furthermore, speech is associated with acts of pain: *kalama* 'to wound'/ *qassa* 'to cut'/ *haka*, 'to backbite'/ *sarada* 'to pierce, perforate.' Language is associated with both pain and pleasure. Also note the paradox of this in a culture that highly valorized its linguistic output.



*And as for the poets -- it is the erring ones who follow them.  
Dost thou not see how in every valley, they wander aimlessly,  
And that they speak of what they do not do?*<sup>15</sup>

The verse's application of *hāma* to poets is of great import for an understanding of the errors of language as perceived by both the ethically and courtly oriented ideological currents. This application posits the tie between language, on the one hand, and desire and pleasure, on the other hand. The poets' *huyām* would seem to be a function of their craft. Just as *huyām* is conceived of as an excess or extravagance of desire, likewise poetry is imagined as an extravagance of language, and significantly, it is this extravagance that yields desire.<sup>16</sup> For the courtly love ideology, this aspect of language is pleasurable because it generates desire but also painfully tragic because it results in an endless deferral of desire's fulfillment. For orthodox Muslims, this excessive literariness or an overabundance of tropes in poetic language is blameworthy because it is deception or untrue speech.<sup>17</sup> Desire is condemned by them as sinful for its privileging of a human over a divine referent. But it is also blameworthy because it generates desire, and for its proclivity toward pleasurable

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<sup>15</sup>26:224-226.

<sup>16</sup>My use of words connoting abundance and plentifulness in discussing language is not inappropriate because Arab critics like Ibn Qutaybah themselves describe language in terms of a corporeal vocabulary; he uses words such as 'fat' and 'lean.' In *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, Ibn Qutaybah uses the words *samīn* and *ghathīha*, the latter meaning 'lean language' and 'bad speech.' Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, commentator Al-Sayyid Ahmad Saqr (Cairo: Dār Ihya' al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, n.d.) 11.

<sup>17</sup>See 6:112: "We made for every prophet an enemy, the evil ones from among men and *jinn*. They suggest one to another gilded speech [*zukhruf al-qawl*] in order to deceive."

excesses.<sup>18</sup>

The prominence of language in this Qur'anic verse is further underscored by use of the word "valley" or *wāḍin* which generally means "an intervening space," as the "space between mountains or hills," but in addition to a geographical space, it can also be construed with reference to language.<sup>19</sup> It denotes both land and speech/language (*wāḍī al-kalām*).<sup>20</sup> In fact, al-Ṭabarī in his commentary of this verse, conveys an exegesis of *wāḍin* primarily in its linguistic sense. He variously renders it as: "In every slip/mistake of language, they are complicit." (*fī kulli laḡwīn yakhdā'ūna*). "In every mode [of speech], they diversify and embellish." (*fī kulli fannīn yaftannūna*); "In every manner [of discourse], they meander," (*fī kulli fannīn, yahimūna*).<sup>21</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, through this verse, implies that the Qur'anic verse condemns the rhetorical or tropological dimensions of language. On the basis of al-Ṭabarī's interpretation, it seems that the verse especially denigrates diversity in modes of composition and the multiplicity of genres. By speaking pejoratively of all the different *ṭuruq al-qawl* (the ways and methods of speech) or what Ibn Qutayba defines as *majāzāt*, God seems to be accusing poets of precisely what they accused the prophet of: that their speech is a bundle of lies.<sup>22</sup> He faults poetry for being errant

<sup>18</sup>See also the Qur'anic verse (31:6) regarding how the pleasure of speech (*lahw l-hadīth*) can lead one morally astray.

<sup>19</sup>Lane's Lexicon.

<sup>20</sup>Lisān al-'Arab: "Some say it [valley] is the valley of the desert in which the lover or the poet finds himself alone. It is also said that it is the valley of speech [*wāḍī al-kalām*]." Ibn Qutaybah, too, uses this same word in a linguistic sense. Ibn Qutaybah, Ta'wīl, 10.

<sup>21</sup>Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Majma' al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān (Syria: Matba'āt al-'Irfān, 1983) 4: 207-208.

<sup>22</sup>"A clearer notion of [Ibn Qutayba's]...concept of *majāz* is provided by

language, for being language that roams because it is not subject to referential restraint. Poetry, more than most modes of discourse, is caught up in the infinite play of signifier as trope. This wandering and overabundance of language in poetry is considered by the prophet to be a form of deception: "[poets] speak of what they do not do." Again, what is being denigrated is the literariness or non-referentiality of language.

The Qur'anic verse assigns blame to the ability of poetic language to deceive, to conceal, and to be at variance with a presumed truth or reality. But orthodoxy's criticism of language's ability to conceal actually stemmed from its concern over poetry's effectiveness in revealing, exposing or (de)constructing public selves. The magnitude of God's condemnation betrayed precisely what orthodoxy desired to hide: the power of poetic language. For the Arabs, poetry was a most effective rhetorical weapon, a weapon at the hands of which the prophet Muhammad's reputation had suffered. Many of those wishing to discredit the prophet insisted that the Qur'an, too, because it contained *majāz* (tropical speech), was untrue because "*majāz* was *kadhib*."<sup>23</sup> Also, invective and satire became especially prominent in the early Islamic period and both individual and collective reputations were frequently and irreparably destroyed through the recitation and circulation of poetry.

Fundamentally, God is implying that only His speech (language with a divine referent) is devoid of falsehood and artifice. Qur'anic revelation as

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the list of subcategories...they include: *isti'āra* (metaphor plus metonymy), *tamthīl* (analogy), *qalb* (inversion), *taqdīm wa-ta'khīr* (hysteron proteron), *hadhf* (ellipsis), *takrār* (repetition)..." W. Heinrichs, "On the genesis of the *ḥaqīqa-majāz* dichotomy," *Studia Islamica*, 59 (1984): 130.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 137.

divine speech, is thus the fixed text to which, in Suzanne Stetkevych's words, "the qasidah [the ode] played profane anti-text."<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the verse's admonition that poets should not deviate from a perceived reality or truth contradicted the prevailing theory of Arabic poetics which separated poetry as artistic form from reality or personal experience: what mattered was the form, the artistry or craftsmanship and not any reality or truth behind the poetry.<sup>25</sup> Implicit in this condemnation is a rejection of an entire theory of poetics as practiced in the Arab context.

According to this ethically didactic ideological strain, it is language's non-veridical (i.e., tropological) dimensions that cause poets to deviate morally and wander. Yet, to paraphrase another critic, 'if language itself is at fault for not conveying truth, then the distinction between a lying poet and a truthful poet no longer exists and God's condemnation may be extended to a rejection of all poets.'<sup>26</sup> Also, by censuring poets for luxuriating in the play (*lahw*) of language's signifiers, God imputes moral culpability to the pleasure they derive from this.

For the courtly love discourse, the errors of language are unrelated to

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<sup>24</sup>Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993) preface xi.

<sup>25</sup>Qudāma ibn Ja'far: *aḥsan al-shi'r akdhabuhu*. See also Vincent Cantarino, Arab Poetics in the Golden Age (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975) 27-41, G. Van Gelder, The Bad and the ugly: attitudes toward invective poetry (Hijā') in classical Arabic literature (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989) 33-34, and K. Abū Deeb, "Literary Criticism," in The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, 'Abbasid Belles-Lettres, Julia Ashtiany, eds. et. al., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>26</sup>Toril Moi, "Desire in Language," 21. Moi makes these comments in reference to A. Cappellanus's treatment of language and women in his famous love treatise but they are very relevant to the treatment of language and poets here.

a phenomenology outside of language—they have nothing to do with considerations of truth and falsehood, good and evil. Courtly love ideology recognizes that an individual's desire germinates in language. But this discourse decries language as tragically errant for two reasons. First, it deems tragic the fact that an individual inevitably has to reveal and express his/her desire since it originates in and through language. Second, language is tragically errant because it causes the satisfaction of desire to be perpetually deferred. According to the courtly love ideology, the evanescence of the love object, that occurs once desire is expressed through language, means that fulfillment is unattainable. Paradoxically, those very tropological dimensions of language that yield desire and pleasure are also the ones that result in the evanescence of the pleasure and therefore, they also engender pain.

Importantly, for both the courtly and orthodox ideologies, *huyām* as errancy in the spatial sense is inextricably linked to linguistic errancy. The errancy of language and desire causes those that craft language, the poets, to wander morally, mentally and geographically.

### Huyām as Linguistic Errancy

Below, six passages from the romance are quoted in which the use of the word *hāma* occurs. Nearly all these passages show Majnūn's geographical errancy to be preceded by emotional excesses that are linked to linguistic utterances. In the Majnūn Laylā romance, the internal vagrancy of emotion or desire is coterminous with a vagrancy of language, but it is language that precedes desire. Linguistic errancy results in geographic errancy. Situated between the two poles of linguistic and geographic

errancy and significantly, mapped out on a terrestrial topography, are all the other forms of errancy, including physical, moral, spiritual, mental, and social forms. Thus, linguistic errancy, followed by other types of errancy, paves the way for geographical errancy in the romance. The errors of the ear/tongue become the errors of the heart and mind and all ultimately lead to those of the road.

The first instance of the use of *hāma* occurs in Majnūn's father's account of his son's excessive reaction after Laylā recites verses to him in secret and about secrets.

*Both of us appear in front of people  
to hate each other  
and yet each is entrenched with his friend.  
The secrets of the glancer are not hidden  
if the eyes disclose what he conceals.*

[Hearing this], he fell into a swoon and arose having lost his senses. He [began to] not wear any garment except rags, and to walk about naked...If Laylā was mentioned to him, he would start talking rationally about her, without committing any errors in his words. He forsook the ritual prayer and when it was said to him: what is the matter with you that you don't pray, he would not respond with [even] a word. We used to confine and chain him, and then he [resorted to] biting his tongue and lips until fearing for him, we let him go his way. And so, he madly wanders [*fa-huwa yahīmu*]. (16)

The second time *hāma* is used in the romance is after Majnūn's hearing a crier cry out the word "Laylā." He hears the shouting of her name while journeying with his father to perform pilgrimage. At the Ka'aba, Majnūn subverts the rite of pilgrimage by beseeching God to intensify love's

affliction, rather than asking for relief from it: "O God, increase my love for and addiction to Laylā and do not cause me to ever forget her memory!"

Whereupon he wandered [*hāma*] deliriously and became disordered. He could not take control of himself. [They said] he used to roam madly [*yahīmu*] on earth with the beasts, not eating save what was growing in the ground by way of herbage and not drinking except with the gazelles when they came to their watering-places. The hair on his body and head grew long and the gazelles and wild beasts became accustomed to him and did not fear him. He began to roam until he reached the borders of al-Shām and when he regained his senses, he would passers-by of the tribes of the Arabs, 'which way to the Najd?' It would be said to him: what do you have to do with the Najd? You are practically in the Shām. You are in such-and-such place. He would say: Show me the way [to the Najd]. They took mercy on him and offered to give him a mount, or some clothes but he refused. They directed him toward the Najd and he headed that way. (22)

In the third instance, the expression *hāma 'ala wajhihi* is employed after Majnun raves about Laylā in front of his family, the latter having just counseled him to forget her.

In the beginning of his affair, Majnūn used to see Laylā and frequent her company, and have close ties with her. Then she was made to disappear from his gaze. His folk sought to console him over her, saying: "We will marry you to the comliest maiden from your kin clan [but] he refused [any] except Laylā. He used to rave deliriously about her, and mention her by name. (On occasion, he would accede to their wishes and calm down upon hearing their words to him.) At other times, grief and anxiety were stirred up in him and, he could not control what was within him, [to prevent him from] madly roving and wandering [*an yahīma 'ala wajhihi*]. This was before he

became savage and wild, [living] with the beasts in the desert wasteland. His folk used to blame and censure him...(42)

Fourth, the same expression is found in a narrative describing how Majnūn recalls the days he and Laylā as children used to pasture their families' flocks at Mount Taubad.

When he recalled the days he and Laylā used to go around it [the mountain], he felt intense grief and loneliness, and so he roamed aimlessly like a madman [*hāma 'ala wajhihi*] until he reached the boundaries of al-Shām. When reason returned to him, he saw a country he did not know and he said to the people he encountered: I implore you, where is Mount al-Taubad in the land of Banū 'Amir? It was said to him: You are nowhere near the land of Banū 'Amir. You are in al-Shām. Head toward so-and-so star and go that way. He would go on in the direction of that star until he found himself in the land of Yemen. Seeing a country he was ignorant of and people with whom he was unfamiliar, he would inquire of them about al-Taubad and the land of Banū 'Amir. They said: You are nowhere near Banū 'Amir territory. Steer toward such-and-such star. Thus, he did not cease until he arrived at al-Taubad. (52)

Fifth, this word appears in a narrative following a recitation, by the poet, of a couplet in which he faults God for the trial to which he is subjected as a consequence of the loss of his beloved. As soon as Majnūn declaims these verses,

It was called out in the night: you are the one ungrateful of God's decree and rebellious of his commands. Then, he lost his mind and he became wild and unsociable since that night and he has roamed aimlessly with the beasts [*dhahaba ma'l-wahsh 'ala wajhihi*]. (68)



The sixth time that *hāma* is used is in a variant of the aforementioned account by the poet's father of the love affair between his son and Laylā:

When the matter between him and her was disclosed, her father resented having to marry her to him after the revelation of the news. So he married her to one other than him. Thus, my son lost his reason and madness overcame him, and he wandered madly in the desert spaces [*wa-hāma fī al-fayāfī...*](88)

Language--whether it is Majnūn's hearing his beloved's verses or the crier's utterance of her name or his family's admonitions, on the one hand, or whether it is Majnūn's speaking and reciting scandalous verses about Laylā or his raving to God and his family, on the other hand,-- is depicted as the cause of his deviation into other forms of errancy. In many of the narratives cited above, his raving leads to his roving.

In these passages, too, it is the tropological qualities of language that result in the manifestation of desire. As just discussed with reference to the Qur'anic verse on poets, poetic language with its fullness and richness of tropes, its wandering signifiers, seduces both those who craft/perform and listen to it. In the first passage from the romance, it is listening to Laylā's poetry that unmasks Majnūn's desire. In both the first and second passages, it is hearing the word "Laylā" (i.e., the crier's cry of the name "Laylā") that intensifies Majnūn's desire rather than hearing the divine word. Here Majnūn's tragic mistake is his disclosures: disclosure of Laylā's secrets as well as his own inner jealous desire at hearing others pronounce her name (trope). But an orthodox strain constructs him as a sinner and idolater for experiencing rapture through hearing speech (i.e., Laylā's secrets, her

name) that is without a divine referent.

By contrast, an ethically didactic discourse foregrounds Majnūn's sin as allowing for the very germination of desire, whether through wandering of tropes or wandering of the eyes.<sup>27</sup> In the following lines (found at the beginning of the third passage), a direct narrative link exists between the juxtaposition of Majnūn as seer and Laylā as the one absented from his sight: "In the beginning of his affair, Majnūn used to see Laylā and frequent her company as well as have close ties with her. Then she was made to disappear from his gaze." Implicit in this link is the assumption that, in its very infancy, his intimacy with her is deviant. Since the origin of this intimacy lies in his image of her through his eyes, her image must be made to vanish from his gaze.

Returning to the first passage, we read that when Laylā is mentioned to Majnūn, he recites faultless poetry, "without any erring of word," whereas when he is asked why he has abandoned prayer, he utters "not [even] a word." An orthodox strain inserts a double-note of irony in the narrative through this contrast. First, Majnūn is portrayed as being unerringly voluble in language that is highly erring (poetry). Second, his fluency in poetic speech or imperfect language is compared with his muteness when asked to utter prayer that privileges the perfection of divine language. On the other hand, a courtly subtext valorizes the rhetorical

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<sup>27</sup>Orthodox love theorists held gazing to be the primary cause of desire. Bell quotes Ibn al-Jawzī's statement "Looking...is only permissible in the absence of desire...He who claims that he experiences no desire is a liar....It is clear, however, from the words of Ibn Dāwūd, that he did not hold *nazar* [gazing] to be forbidden. In this he was mistaken...the error led first to his disgrace before the people, and finally, to his death." Bell, Love Theory, 27.

dimensions of language through this juxtaposition. In the first instance, mention of Laylā as trope incites Majnūn's desire which then generates his poetry (more tropes). In the second instance, neither desire nor words are incited (Majnūn is speechless)--rather, the reference to prayer evokes antipathy toward tropological language.

Also, Majnūn's verbal outbursts, whether it is his indiscretions in poetry about Laylā (sixth passage) or his raving before God at the Ka'aba or in the couplet in which he complains to God about his trial (second and fifth passages) or his raving before his family (third passage), exemplify language that is out of control. In what follows his raving, in each passage, we see how the errors of language are metaphorized into vagrancies internal and external to the body. Majnūn's inability to control his own emotions and behaviour symbolizes his lack of control over language. *Huyām* acts as a spatial metaphor for the errancies of body and language, and as a metaphor, it conforms to both the didactic and courtly, tragic strains. Raving, whether it is interpreted as tragic revelation or deviant language, is the primary error.

The passages cited above mainly rehearse the theme of Majnūn's tragic revelation of desire; but, as already mentioned, the courtly ideology of love and the orthodox ideological current also found the constitution of desire in language as problematic--although for different reasons. This theme of language's errancy in the production of desire, too, is rehearsed in the Majnūn Laylā romance. Through a foregrounding of language's role in the origin of desire, the romance implies a critique of this role. For example, the story shows that the very birth of Majnūn's desire for Laylā is

situated in language. One of the narratives describing how Majnūn falls in love with Laylā relates that:

Al-Majnūn was addicted to the conversation of women and enamored of them. News of her [Laylā] reached him and she was described to him (*nu'itat lahu*). Then he fell in love with her and resolved to visit her. (44)

Implicit in the foregrounding of Majnūn's desire as being engendered in and through language is the role of linguistic error as espoused by the two ideological strains. An ethically didactic strain blames Majnūn for being a linguistic subject and 'agent' (for pleasurably trading in language as a poet). The position of language as epistemologically highly suspect and volatile becomes that of its subject/agent. His status in language is a sinful privileging of tropes over 'truth.' If the tropological nature of language (i.e., its referentless nature) renders it impervious to considerations of truth and falsehood as well as good and evil, then Majnūn, whose identity and vocation is based in his poetic craft, and for whom the rhetorical dimension of language is indispensable, is morally damned.

The courtly love subtext does not fault Majnūn for experiencing desire. For the purposes of this chapter, what it decries is that this desire inevitably will remain unfulfilled and its satisfaction perpetually will be deferred. Majnūn's desire, a desire defined in terms of tropes and their circulation, is tragically errant because his quest to satisfy this desire will never succeed.

### Huyām as Locomotive Errancy

Majnūn's error of desire, caused by linguistic errancy, proliferates into other errors in the course of the story. The errancy of language/desire ultimately causes Majnūn literally to roam in the wilderness of the desert, where all his other errors are mapped out. Land overshadows language and desire as the topography upon which his errancy is both inscribed and curtailed, and as will be seen shortly, the multivalency of the word 'al-Najd' plays an important role in the examination of his errancy.

An ethically didactic strain constructs the linguistic errancy or *huyām* of Majnūn Laylā's main character primarily as a moral trial, as a case of being morally tested and geographically lost in the wilderness of sin. This construction supports Patricia Parker's observation of romance being "that mode or tendency which remains on the threshold before the promised end, still in the wilderness of wandering, 'error,' or 'trial.'"<sup>28</sup>

Majnūn's *huyām* is mapped out on land, specifically on the topography between the regions of al-Shām and al-Yemen. The Najd essentially signifies the "elevated and conspicuous road" or path. In the second and fourth passages cited above, the depiction of Majnūn as lost or astray in the space between these two opposing geographical peripheries, without being able to find the way out (despite the path's conspicuousness), mirrors his spiritual and moral bewilderment. His geographic roaming from al-Shām to al-Yemen symbolizes not just the fluctuations (lows and highs) in his myriad other states of being but also foregrounds his spiritual and

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<sup>28</sup>Parker, Inescapable Romance, 4.

moral liminality.

On the other hand, his *huyām* also conforms to a courtly, tragic subtext in the romance, in which the contours of a terrestrial topography take on a linguistic and sexual significance. Linguistically, the wandering of the poet toward the Najd symbolizes the proclivity of 'Udhri verse for revelation, for transgressing its own norms of secrecy and discretion since al-Najd as 'the highland or hilly plain of the Arabian peninsula' also means 'the manifest or visible.' Again, the geographical wandering of Majnūn towards the Najd functions as a spatial metaphor for the errors of romance language. Indeed, even the poet's itinerancy between al-Shām and al-Yemen can be symbolically interpreted as evidence for the dialectic of secrecy and revelation that characterizes 'Udhri romances since etymologically al-Shām is identified as the northern region, or the highland, whereas al-Yemen is described as the lowland, with its connotations of being hidden or concealed. The 'Udhri love stories of Jamīl Buthaynah and Qays Lubnā also contain this symbolism of al-Shām versus al-Yemen. Actually, the imagery of mountains and valleys (of highland and lowland, manifest and hidden) that is often present in the romance is another sign of the dialectic of revelation and secrecy that pervades the love story. Majnūn frequently seems to be either perched on a hill or roaming in a valley. Inscribed in the Arabic language are many associations between land and the dialectic of secrecy/revelation. *Sirr*, the word for secret, also means 'choice or valuable land, valley.' The words *najwa/najat*, like *najd* respectively mean revelation (disclosure of secret) and elevated land.

Majnūn's endless roaming (*huyām*) between al-Shām and al-Yemen

in pursuit of the Najd also enacts metonymically the tragic wandering of his desire in search of the beloved. Sexually, the lover-poet's wandering toward the Najd and away from al-Yemen also represents the romance lover's tendency to defer or postpone the consummation of his desire. The link between the female erotic and topography implicit in the etymology of the word 'al-Najd' is indicative of how even the poet's geographical wandering is occurs on a sexual terrain.<sup>29</sup> Al-Najd also means the 'breasts of a woman' and if we extend this metaphor, then al-Yemen, as *al-ghūr* meaning 'the belly, lowland, or hole,' is the hidden female erogenous zone.<sup>30</sup> Majnūn's wandering away from al-Yemen as the site of consummation and more importantly, away from the uncanny and unknowable (because it is hidden) female zone to the visible female erogenous zone (i.e., the mountainous Najd or breasts) is partly suggestive of why the lover-poet is uneasy with consummation--because consummation will always be incomplete even when it takes place, since it eludes the male wanderer's comprehension. In conclusion, the mapping out of Majnūn's journeying or 'adventure as trial' on the female body exemplifies Susan Crane's statement that medieval

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<sup>29</sup>Frye has observed how romance's mythological universe is "a gigantic or macrocosmic body" but this needs to be qualified: its universe seems to be a macrocosmic female body. Frye, *Romance*, 119. Also, it should be noted that the female corporeal, like female voice, is primarily an occulted presence in this medieval Arabic male-generated discourse. Fedwa Malti-Douglas has discussed how the danger of woman is a constant presence in the sexual geography of a male-centered cosmology in medieval Arabic philosophical texts. Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Woman's Body, Woman's Word, Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 89.

<sup>30</sup>In the romance, there is some parallelism between imagery of Najdī hills and female breasts. C.f. Chapter three for other symbolic parallels between the Najd and the beloved.

romance "configures women as a ground of adventure through their contradictions and unknowability."<sup>31</sup>

Besides the lover's wandering, the only other form of the lover's locomotion in the romance consists of his visits to and partings from the beloved. Actually, these are the locomotive counterpart to the linguistic aspect in the medieval Arabic courtship ritual. Just as the lover's discursive identity and performance play an important role in engendering his desire, a locomotive execution--a going and coming, a journeying to and and fro--is also an important element of it.<sup>32</sup> The visit is an important part of the lover's quest for pleasure, as Majnūn indicates.

*There is no good in the world if you do not visit the beloved and  
and if he does not delight in you. (64)*

Yet, if the lover's poetry is errant language, the lover's visits/partings are also deviant or errant movement. As is true of *huyām*, this locomotive aspect of courtship also becomes a spatial metaphor for the errancy of language. The polysemy of the Arabic words *zāra* (to visit) and *hajara* (to part), words that are integral to courtly love's lexicon, is very instructive in this regard. The root of the word *hajara* embraces the following meanings: 'to part, forsake' as well as 'to speak deliriously, to speak nonsense, to use unseemly speech.' The root of the word *zāra* includes meanings of 'to incline, turn aside, deviate' as well as 'to embellish, falsify, counterfeit.'<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Crane, *Gender and Romance*, 61.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>The word *zūr*, derived from this root, means 'to bear false witness or to lie.' In the following Qur'ānic verse the words *zūr* and *laghwu* (idle word, slip of language) are made symbolically and syntactically parallel:



First, the fact that both these words concerned with the lover's movement contain linguistic valences suggests that indeed locomotion is a spatial metaphor for language in the courtship ritual. Second, these meanings demonstrate how spatial errancy is connected with discursive errancy. Embellishments and artifice (concealment) are connected with movement toward the beloved, whereas inappropriate, unseemly expression (manifestation) is linked with movement away from the beloved.<sup>34</sup> Hence, separation or divergence between lovers functions as a spatial or locomotive metaphor for linguistic revelation (the classic verb for separation in the courtly love lexicon is *bāna* which means 'to part, be separated,' but whose root also includes the meaning 'to become evident, plain') and visitation acts as a metaphor for secrecy. The locomotion between lovers (e.g., the visit, the tryst), like linguistic correspondence, must take place in secret. While the tragedy of language is its manifestation of that which it secretes, movement is also tragically errant in its tendency toward difference and rupture. In Majnūn's verses cited below, locomotion in the form of severance (parting) and flight are syntactically and symbolically linked with revelation, bitterness, and death:

*Shall I sever the cord of union? death be less [intolerable]  
Or shall I drink an undrinkable bitter draught from you*

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*And those who bear not false witness [zūr], and  
when they pass by idle talk [bil-laghwi], they pass with dignity.*  
(25:72)

The term "idle talk" (*laghwu*) here has been interpreted as a reference to poetry, a connection that is further supported by the previously discussed exegesis of the famous Qur'ānic verse regarding poets.

<sup>34</sup>See Ibn Ḥazm's quotation in previous chapter, in which revelation is defined as *zuhūran fīl-ḥarakāt wal-'ayn*; in other words, locomotion of body and eyes metaphorizes revelation. Ibn Ḥazm, *Tauq al-Hamāmah*, 60.

*Or shall I flee until I see no neighbors  
Or what should I do? shall I reveal and be overcome? (20)*

If spatial movement is a metaphor for the errancy of language, then one would expect that the romance would also render society's attempt to control this errancy through spatial images. Exactly this occurs: society's attempt to contain Majnūn's errors occurs through a curbing of his movement. It is significant, given the etymology of *zāra*, that this curtailment takes the form of Majnūn as being banned from visiting his beloved. The ban on his ability to visit is a symbolic enactment of a ban on his ability to versify (which, according to a morally didactic strain, is equated with lying and concealing). Laylā is rendered spatially invisible to him (his gaze circumscribed, his desire contained). The weight of social authority in this measure to punish Majnūn's errancy is underscored by the authorities' support of her family in enforcing this ban. For the poet, restriction of spatial access to woman as object of desire translates into restriction on freedom of movement on land. Thus, when the beloved is veiled or enclosed, the spatial world of the poet-lover likewise narrows, yet another link between a woman and land found in the romance. Linguistic errors let loose his movement to the beloved (land widens) and punishment of these errors reigns in this movement (land narrows). Having been prohibited from visiting Laylā, Majnūn recites:

*As if the mountain-roads were the circle of a ring  
around me, never increasing in length or breadth. (93)*

Mountainous terrain, as a spatial metaphor for revelation, is the site at which his world is narrowed.

On the other hand, the romance reveals how the curtailment of Majnūn's movement toward his beloved also intensifies his (forcibly imposed) movement afar from the beloved: visiting restricted/wandering unleashed. As the third passage cited above shows, an attempt to contain the poet's excesses around the center or his beloved results in his vagrancies at the periphery, that is, on and beyond the margins of society/Najd.

But even more restrictive than the ban on visitation of the beloved are the consequences of the sultan's edict making Majnūn's blood legal. In effect, this edict deprives Majnūn of all the rights to protection traditionally due to him as a tribal member. Theoretically, it makes him a marked man in his homeland, and thereby considerably circumscribes the poet's movement on land. Society's containment of his movement on land thus becomes a metaphor for its attempt to curtail his errant desire and language. The presence of this motif of the sultan's edict in at least three 'Udhri romances, including Majnūn Laylā, shows how the myriads of errors (e.g., social, spiritual, moral, geographical) resulting from errancy in desire/language are punished through restriction of locomotion. The idea of a withdrawal of social protection accorded to the individual is common to this restriction.<sup>35</sup>

The deprivation of tribal protection renders the itin(erant) lover completely liminal. The deprivation is both a cause and a result of his being socially, morally and spatially astray in this romance. His journeying becomes full of dangers due to this lack of social protection. The motif of travel (*riḥla*) as danger and liminality in the romance is analagous to the

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<sup>35</sup>The other two romances are Jamīl Buthayna and Qays Lubnā.

poet-lover's trial or liminality in the moral sense. In the following couplet, Laylā invokes social protection for her itin(erant) lover during his return journey to her.

*Would that I knew, while dangers are so many  
when Qays's camel will be set off for return  
May my soul be ransom for the one who does not prepare his  
camel,  
and the one who is led astray if God does not protect him. (87)*

Majnūn's character too is shown to be well aware of the gravity of these dangers, as is evident from the verses below. These verses are preceded by an anecdote that describes how he and his folk during a journey reach a fork, a branch of which is frequently traveled upon by Laylā's menfolk and the taking of which entails another day's travel. Majnūn asks his folk to turn (deviate) with him toward this branch in the fork but they refuse. He then goes on by himself, chanting:

*And should I leave Laylā when there is nothing between  
me and her save one night's journey; indeed, I would then  
be patient.  
Assume that I am a man from among you who has lead his  
camel astray  
[Yet] he has a contract of protection, indeed this right due  
is great  
But the friend who has been left behind is [surely] more of an  
obligation...than [the case of] a camel going astray  
May God forgive Laylā today, indeed she has gone astray  
[she has acted] wrongfully, if she condemns me to die of  
love.(75)*

The two branches of the fork symbolize the two discourses interwoven in

the romance: one branch, representing the courtly love strain, is less acceptable because it involves a digression (an errant rather than an a straight path), but for the lover it is preferable and pleasurable because it leads him to his beloved. What is noteworthy is how Majnūn alternates between invoking both the traditional tribal values (contract of protection, honor) and the norms of courtly love (journey toward the beloved, dying of love) in his reproaches of his folk for not joining him on the road to her. By drawing attention to both the protection due to him and the honor of his beloved, he bolsters his argument that they (his kin) have erred in not agreeing to accompany him on the journey to meet with Layla.

As the errant poet-lover, Majnūn also takes pleasure in foregoing the comforts and protections of society for the sake of his passion. He recites the verses below after Laylā secretly swears to him that she will not “sit in the company of a man other than you until I die, unless I am compelled to do it.” Hearing these words from his beloved, he departs “the happiest and most relieved of men,” saying:

*I think that passion for her will leave me in a  
wilderness without goods, without a family.  
Without anyone to turn to with my last will and  
testament,  
With only my camel and saddle as friends.  
My love for her has eclipsed the love for others  
before her and taken a place which nothing before  
had taken. (46)*

The narrative ascribes happiness to Majnūn yet the verses exhibit a mixture of both elation and tragic despondency. The irony of this contrast between

narrative and verses is accentuated through an examination of the valences of the key words in his verses. Already present in the semantics of the word for 'passion' (*hawā*) is the concept of error. Lois Giffen has discussed how there are two basic senses in which *hawā* is used in the medieval Arabic love treatises: the pagan Bedouin sense of 'love' and an Islamic sense of 'evil desire.'<sup>36</sup> The word *ahwā*, derived from *hawā*, means 'opinions swerving from the right way' and *ahl al-ahwā* means 'people of erroneous opinions.' In the Qur'ān, one finds repeated mention of *ahwā*, of desires that lead one astray.<sup>37</sup> The word for 'wilderness' (*maḍalla*) in these verses is also translated as 'error, confusion, misleading country.' Thus, Majnūn's characterization emerges as symbolically ambivalent as a result of this irony: he is both the tragically itin(erant) and sinfully wayward lover-poet.

### Huyām as Errancy of Desire

There is another important way in which spatial errancy functions as a metaphor for the errors of language and desire. We notice that the lover continually postpones arriving at any destination, continually defers attaining his goal in his romance quest. The itinerancy (*huyām*) of the lover-poet in the *Majnūn Laylā* romance is like that of the brigand-poet (*su'lūk*) who "journeys repeatedly and habitually, never arriving at a destination, a perpetual passenger in a transitional state."<sup>38</sup> This romance, in contrast to the tribal pre-Islamic ode but like *sa'alik* poetry, substitutes social

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<sup>36</sup>Lois Giffen, *The Theory of Profane Love Among the Arabs: The Development of the Genre* (New York: New York University Press, 1971) 118-119.

<sup>37</sup> E.g., 6:119

<sup>38</sup>S. Stetkevych, *Mute*, 87.

liminality for social aggregation. In the pre-Islamic ode, the quest motif or the journeying (*rāḥil*) aimed and arrived at a 'destination'—its *rāḥil* culminated in the *fakhr* section that celebrated the poet's re-integration with his tribe. The pre-Islamic poet's embarking on the desert-journey was a "heroic quest" that was ultimately realized.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, in the 'Udhri stories, as in *sa'ālīk* poetry the quest becomes an end in itself.<sup>40</sup> It is not that a destination is not longed for—Majnūn constantly longs to reach the Najd and Laylā. But it is the longing or desiring that is ultimately valued rather than reaching the destination.

Postponement of arrival at a destination acts as a spatial metaphor for a deferral of desire's attainment. In the beginning of this chapter, we cited Ibn Dāwūd's phrase, "the desiring of cannot be achieved" as an important trait of *ḥuṣyām*. This is a wandering of Majnūn's desire. In the verses below, the hopelessness of attainment does not prevent desire from wandering. The lover continues to recall nostalgically the beloved even if she remains inaccessible.

*O Beauty of the World, which my desires are unable to attain,  
and the parting of whom is not apparent to my heart...  
The soul does not refrain from remembrance of you  
for even a moment  
Even if I at times chastise it much (84).*

Just how strong is desire's tendency to roam can be seen in the

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>40</sup>The brigand-poet, I would argue, is in certain ways an ancestor of the 'Udhri lover-poet. The dialectical nature of the links between *sa'ālīk* poetry and the traditional pre-Islamic ode that S. Stetkevych identifies, mirrors the relationship of the later 'Udhri love poetry/romances to this ode. Ibid., 157.

striking passage cited below. In this passage, we note that Majnūn quite self-consciously wants to cultivate and prolong his desire, even if this may entail the wandering of that desire from Laylā to other women, from one love object to other objects of desire.

A [group] of women sat with Majnūn and said to him: What is it that has led you to permit yourself [to do] such things as you have desired to do...[for the sake of] passion for Laylā? Indeed she is a woman among women. Would you consider diverting your desire from her to one of us [so that] we can help you and compensate you for your passion and [thus] that which has lapsed from your mind and body returns? Then he said them: Were I able to divert desire from her to you, I would turn it away from her and from each one after her (*wa 'an kulli ahadin ba'daha*) and would live among people, harmoniously and with ease. (82)

I find this to be a highly unusual and revealing passage. Majnūn's response in it is such a curious and significant statement that each of its components merits analysis. It shows us to what degree Majnūn's character is highly aware of the reasons for its own liminality. In effect, he very self-consciously suggests to his readers that what renders him tragic, what makes him unable to live as a social being, is that he cannot shift his desire away from Laylā and from other women that may follow her, and toward a woman from among the group of women.

First, what is the difference between 'Laylā and others after her,' on the one hand, and the women of the group? According to the women in the group, there ought not to be any difference: "Indeed she [Laylā] is a woman among women." Through this statement, they seem to be encouraging Majnūn to dethrone his beloved, to view her not as a remote and perfect



ideal but as any other flesh-and-blood woman. Moreover, the women of the group explicitly ask Majnūn: Would you consider diverting your desire from her to one of us [so that] we can help you and compensate you for your passion and [thus] that which has lapsed from your mind and body returns?" There are sexual connotations to the use of the verb 'to compensate' (*jazzā*) in this passage. The 'Udhri lover-poet, Jamīl uses this same verb when he propositions Buthaynah. By employing this verb and asking Majnūn "to divert his passion (*hawā*) from [Laylā] to one of them," the women offer him the possibility of an intimacy with one or more of them. Their question also sets up an opposition between the afflictive nature of his fixation on Laylā and the curative nature of a possible relation with one or more of them. A causal connection is posited between a requited love ("compensate you for your passion") and a bodily and mental rehabilitation ("that which has lapsed from...mind and body returns"). In effect, they offer Majnūn a different kind of love relation, one in which desire does not feed on the absence or deferral of fulfillment but rather on the presence of a kind of satisfaction or compensation. Hence, he is being asked to end his fixation on an unrequited passion in order to accept a requited love.

What is significant is that Majnūn refuses the women's offer not out of fidelity to his beloved (for he hints at the possibility of other women being the objects of his desire after his affair with Laylā) but rather because he does not want the fulfillment of desire. He responds by acknowledging that he is unable to live in ease as a communal person precisely because of his inability to stop the "hoping for what cannot be and the desiring of what

cannot be achieved" (Ibn Dawūd's description of *'ishq*). Ostensibly, he describes himself as having no choice in the matter ("were I able to...I would turn away...") thus, implying that he is somehow compelled into forever postponing desire's fulfillment.

Second, Majnūn's reference to "each one after her" (*wa 'an kulli ahadin ba'daha*), is a slip that strongly contradicts the lover's stance throughout the romance. In the romance, Majnūn's posture is such that we are led to believe that Laylā is his one and only beloved. In fact, the entire 'Udhri corpus of love stories is considered to be about monogamous love affairs. In the love story of Jamīl Buthaynah, there is a narrative which has resonances with the one cited above concerning Majnūn, and Jamīl's response is similar to that of Majnūn, but importantly, Jamīl makes no reference to other objects of desire. The narrative depicts Jamīl's father imploring the poet to forget Buthaynah (especially since she has been married to another man). His father explicitly states that women are always available but Jamīl counters with: "By God, were I able to efface her memory from my heart and to erase her image from my mind's eye, I would have, but there is no way to that...indeed this is a trial and affliction."<sup>41</sup> The very titles, by which these stories are historically consecrated, are formed through a monogamous pairing of the beloved's name with that of the lover. The title Majnūn Laylā is a grammatical construct in which Majnūn is a possessive construct of Laylā (i.e., Majnūn of Laylā).

Yet the above slip indicates that even after having met his ideal

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<sup>41</sup> Jamīl Buthaynah in Kitāb al-Aghānī 8: 129-130.

beloved, the poet is fantasizing about other objects of desire. An example of his speech that suggests there were women he was enamored of before he met her is the following verse: *My love for her has eclipsed the love for others before her, and taken a place which nothing before had taken.* (46) The romance does reveal that Majnūn was quite the 'ladies man' and very fond of women's company and converse.

Third, exactly what does the phrase "after her" (*ba'daha*) mean? This reference to the existence of other love objects after his romance with Laylā, is most incongruous. In the romance, there is no post-Laylā phase. Majnūn is disclosing that there may be others, not during his affair with Laylā but after the end of this affair; yet in the romance, the end of the poet's affair is coterminous with the end of his life.

Majnūn's reference to "each one after her" (*wa 'an kulli ahadin ba'daha*), can be interpreted as an indication of how it is upon an unrequited love, a fantasy beloved, that his desire is founded. Though the beloved's image in this fantasy may change, it remains just that--a fantasy or an absent love object. Indeed, the object must be absent--it must not yield a presence or hold a promise of fulfillment--for desire to fixate upon it. Majnūn portrays himself as unable to divert his desire to the women in the group only because they offer a hope of requital and satisfaction in the love affair. His "true love" is a love that privileges the deferral rather than the consummation of union. Ultimately, it is with the phantom or fantasy of his own desire that he is in love. Hence, in the romance, tragedy also consists of Majnūn's fixation on the unrequitedness of love, a fixation that prevents him from living "harmoniously and with ease."

In fact, all the 'Udhri romances are about this endless deferral of desire's fulfillment. True love or desire in these romances is defined as that which ought not to be consummated. In the 'Udhri romance of Jamīl Buthaynah, Jamīl, at one point, asks his beloved if she would 'compensate him' by doing "as men and women do for the quenching of love's thirst?" She rejects the offer saying "true love is spoiled when one has sexual intercourse."<sup>42</sup> Union is ultimately not sought because it means the end of desire and pleasure. Desire is regarded as a pleasurable disease, and those experiencing it do not want it to end. Ibn Hazm, in his famous love treatise, The Ring of the Dove, observes: "Love...is a delightful malady, a most desirable sickness. Whoever is free of it likes not to be immune, and whoever is struck down by it yearns not to recover."<sup>43</sup>

Ostensibly, the 'Udhri poet-lovers frame themselves as seeking fulfillment and marriage with the beloved, but then they thwart their chances to achieve these goals and portray themselves the victims of fate, social mores or the beloved's caprice. Generally, it is the beloved who is blamed. Just as the women, in the above quoted passage, employ the language of commerce in offering Majnūn sexual 'compensation,' in the couplet below, Majnūn ostensibly seeks 'compensation' from Laylā for his desire. It should be mentioned that Laylā also uses this same word in a couplet describing how nobody but Majnūn can 'compensate her.' (pg 84)

*...He postpones payment of my debt,  
he neither keeps the cash far away from my right to it,  
thereby denying that it is there  
nor does he tell me he is going to pay me...(28)*

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 105.

<sup>43</sup>Ibn Hazm, The Ring, 31.

Here, Laylā is the one deviously deferring payment of the 'debt.'<sup>44</sup> The anecdote preceding these verses indicates that the debt actually consists of Laylā's promise to invite him for a visit to her. In other words, she owes him an opportunity to see her as well as a chance to display his literary skills before her. It is unclear of what Majnūn's original loan to Laylā consisted. Presumably these verses were recited before his knowledge of her betrothal and marriage to Ward ibn Thaqīf, for by accusing her of "neither keeping away the cash from my right, nor denying it is there," he is accusing her of neither saying yes to another man nor categorically saying no to him. Men's proprietary claims to Laylā's sexual body are noteworthy.

Only ostensibly does Majnūn seek satisfaction of his desire for Laylā. Actually, he deliberately distances any possibility of fulfillment. For 'Udhri poets such as Majnūn, since "the attainment of an end [or union with beloved] is problematic, or impossible, the focus may be less on arrival or completion than on the strategy of delay."<sup>45</sup> As a strategy of deferral, whatever obstacles or calamities that come in the way of love's fulfillment are welcomed by the poet-lover.

*There is no good in a love that does not have a calamity in it [a calamity] such as one in which its experiencer is in the throes of death. (29)*

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<sup>44</sup>See Majnūn's verse "Indeed, you are one deprived of solace--it is as if you view Laylā as a debt for which you are the debtor," (*mughraman anta gharīmuḥu*-pg. 79). The definitions of the word *gharīma* include both 'to be inflamed with love' and 'to take on a debt/obligation.' In Ibn Qutaybah's *'Uyūn al-akhbār*, there is a statement concerning how the Arabs regard it a disgrace ('ayb) for a woman to be married to a man who is enamored of her (*mughraman bihā*). Ibn Qutaybah, *'Uyūn al-Akhbār*, 4:128.

<sup>45</sup>Parker, *Inescapable Romance*, 5.

We see how Majnūn deems being in passion's "throes of death" a sign of the *plaisir de l'amour*. It is this very "death experience" that makes love good or pleasurable. Distance from the beloved causes despair but proximity to the ideal of unattainment enlivens desire.

*Distance does not console the self  
and she [the self] does not deviate from what she does not attain.*  
(Dīwān)

In the following verse too, we see how desire's satisfaction is only to be deferred, so as to prolong the emotion. *I part from you, missing you and I visit you, fearful* (48) recites Majnūn. The reference to parting comes before visiting (an example of *taqdīm wa-ta'khīr*, hysteron proteron), perhaps because desire has to flow before it can ebb and it is through parting (distance) that desire intensifies and through proximity (visit) that it wanes. The tension between presence and absence of the beloved in this verse mirrors the fluctuations in the level of desire experienced by the lover. Visiting the beloved, Majnūn is faced with the potentiality of some degree of desire's fulfillment. This is problematic and therefore, mitigates the desire. Departing from the beloved heightens his desire as a consequence of her impending absence or the remoteness of desire's fulfillment.

However, as noted earlier, romance's deferral of arrival at a destination is a spatial metaphor for the errors of desire and language. The error of desire, its postponement of fulfillment, is fundamentally an error of language. If true love is defined as a lack of consummation, then true love or desire is articulated through the vertiginousness of signifiers in language.

It is the prolonging of desire through a wandering from one female icon to another (in other words, desire's endless projection upon and transference from one image to another). The male wanderer's fixation is perpetuated through the roaming of his desire from one trope to another. The wandering of Majnūn or his *huyām*, is fundamentally a wandering of the signifier in language, precisely the aspect of language condemned by the prophet. Hence, the *huyām* or desire of Majnūn--Majnūn as a discursively-constituted subject-- is the literariness of language, its wandering tropes and signifiers. The instability inherent in language and desire has as its counterpart, spatial instability. Majnūn's locomotion in the romance takes the form of not stopping but moving from site to site, endlessly roaming. Within both the linguistic and spatial realms of the courtship ritual there is never a stable geographic and semantic site.

This wandering of desire or deferral of union is precisely what constitutes the pleasure of the lover. For the male lover, fulfillment of desire is equated with the end of pleasure for one very important reason. Fulfillment of desire would mean the end of his ability to luxuriate in the eloquence of language in the courtship ritual--whether the language be his own or that of/about the beloved. Certainly, the lover's literary prowess constitutes his desire so that desire's attainment would result in an end to the pleasure of his discursive identity and performance. Hence, a deferral rather than an achievement of union is sought.

### Errancy of the Romance Genre

On the level of genre, this *huyām*, that is, an endless quest or

wandering, serves as a metaphor for the definition of romance itself. According to Patricia Parker, "'romance' is characterized primarily as a form which simultaneously quests for and postpones a particular end, objective or object."<sup>46</sup> Northrop Frye describes this questing as "the endless adventures and endless sexual stimulation of the wandering of desire" in romance.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the romance narrative's postponement of the quest's realization is also a postponement of desire's consummation. Majnūn's postponement of desire's consummation, in other words, his prolonging of desire, becomes the prolonging of the romance narrative.

Importantly, 'unchastity' becomes a narrative imperative in these romances. In other words, since the 'Udhri romance narrative depends on union's deferral, chastity becomes in it a narrative strategy.<sup>48</sup> Continuation of a state of chastity and of romance narrative become one and the same thing. The achievement of desire, that is sexual union, would be the downfall of romance. If marriage or consummation is the narrative conclusion of comic romance, in the 'Udhri tragic romance, the conclusion is the lover's death, not his union. True love, defined as lack of sexual union, is a fatal love. Narrative closure in all the 'Udhri stories consists of the death of the lover. Death, rather than a happy union of the lovers, marks completion in these romances' narratives.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>47</sup>In a discussion of the genre, Frye quotes the following line from Ecclesiastes: "Better is the sight of the eye than the wandering of desire." What is being condemned in this line is an insatiability of appetite, a state wherein being desirous or desiring is prolonged endlessly. Frye, *Romance*, 30.

<sup>48</sup> I would like to thank Peter Parolin for this important observation.

<sup>49</sup>Of course, the 'Udhri lovers are famous as 'those who are slain in love,' In the '*Uyūn al-akhbār*, we find the following quote: It was said to a Bedouin:



Majnūn's chastity or more accurately, unchastity becomes the celebration of pleasure. A number of his verses espouse a love for the profane idea of *lahw*, meaning both 'amusement, fun' and 'woman'. An example of Majnūn's verses reflecting his love of *lahw* is the following:

*I recalled Laylā and the bygone years  
when people who said do not pursue pleasure [lahw] did not get any  
help from me or I did not assist against amusement [lahw] to one who  
approved thereof. (34)*

The celebration of woman as pleasure or *lahw* is a metaphor for the pleasure of speech (*lahw al-ḥadīth*). In one of the Qur'anic verse (31:5), this enjoyment of tropological or untrue language, this *lahw al-ḥadīth*, is identified as a source of moral corruption. More generally, the Qur'an contains many verses that warn believing Muslims from pursuing *lahw* in any and all of its meanings:

*What is life on earth save play and amusement [lahw], the Hereafter  
is goodness for those who are pious...<sup>50</sup>*

Precisely because it is the celebration of pleasure, the deferral of desire's consummation in these romances is troubling to orthodox Muslim critics. For conservative Muslim critics in the medieval period, the 'Udhri romance's code of privileging *'ishq* over *wasl*, desire over legitimate union, was morally and socially deviant.<sup>51</sup> The privileging of desire over its union was interpreted as a kind of *shirk* or as a privileging of profane love over

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"From whence are you? He said: from a people, that when they love, they die," [*aḥabbu, mātu*], pg 131, *Kitāb al-Nisā*.'

<sup>50</sup> 6:32

<sup>51</sup> Giffen, *Love Theory*, 129.

Divine love.<sup>52</sup> A morally ethical subtext of the romance depicts Majnūn's wandering of desire or 'consummation forever stuck in potentia' as a trial, as a case of being tested and lost in the wilderness of desire.<sup>53</sup> This didactic strain constructs Majnūn's wandering of desire as a religious violation.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, we note how the errancy of genre comments on the errancy of character and vice versa. As Parker notes, 'the errors of romance's characters are the unavoidable result of the genre's digressive, errant nature and likewise, the errant nature of romance is the inevitable consequence of the errors of its characters.'<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, the errors of the genre and its characters also become those of its 'audience.' Thus, the error of romance was also evident in its reception, as well as in the questionable performative uses to which it was put. Further proof of the postulation that, in the medieval Arabic milieu, language was regarded as engendering desire is that the romance genre specifically was blamed for its desire-producing qualities. Love poems and

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<sup>52</sup>Yet there is an irony in orthodoxy's stance because the very privileging of the quest over union may have arisen as a consequence of an Islamic impact. As A. J. Arberry, in the preface to his translation of The Ring of the Dove, notes: "Moreover the puritanical spirit of Islam, making a virtue out of social necessity, discovered as much satisfaction in the quest as in the conquest, The idealization of a sort of Platonic love in which the lover never achieved union with the beloved, inspired much of the finest poetry of Arabs." Ibn Hazm, Ring of the Dove, 12.

<sup>53</sup>Romance also "is that mode or tendency which remains on the threshold before the promised end, still in the wilderness of wandering, 'error,' or 'trial.'" Parker, Inescapable Romance, 4.

<sup>54</sup>Lois Giffen makes the following important observation: "Paradoxically, the influence of Islam may have transmuted pagan Arab passionate love to chaste 'Udhri love which then became almost a religion of love and a blasphemy to zealous Muslims." Giffen, Theory of Profane Love, 120 (footnote no. 7).

<sup>55</sup>Parker, Inescapable Romance, 28.

stories were condemned for their privileging of desire over reason ('*aql*) and self-control (*hilm*), because this, in turn, incited the desires of its audience members. A tenth-century Baghdadi youth declaiming or listening to Majnūn's verses might feel desire in the same way the poet himself does in the romance when he hears a description of Laylā or her verses.

For the questionable performative uses of romance (an example of which will be given shortly), the courtly class was faulted by religious elites. The error of romance thus became a symbolic locus for the tensions between courtly, 'secular' and urban religious elites. Since the antecedents for the love exemplified in romance were to be found in pagan, Bedouin conceptions of love, romance's appeal to the courtly elites was looked upon with suspicion and disapproval by the religious elites.<sup>56</sup> Actually, the court's patronage and cultivation of Bedouin poetry and romances allowed it to consolidate its identification with the mass of Bedouin Arabs under its rule. But orthodox Muslims interpreted courtly elites' fondness for the pleasure of romances as a sign of these elites' own paganism and 'unbelief.' Courtly patronage of a genre whose moral waywardness which might lead believing Muslims astray was not welcomed by the orthodox. According to Muslim orthodoxy, the real *jihād* was the *jihād al-nafs* or the battle against one's own passions, and certainly not the *jihād* as redefined by a Bedouin poet-lover like Jamīl, who in its view, surrendered to his passions.<sup>57</sup> For the religious elites, the errancy and passion of romance was potentially as subversive as that of the pagan, Bedouin element in the Islamic body politic. How else to explain the corruption of the aristocracy (especially its

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<sup>56</sup>Giffen, *Theory on Profane Love*, 117-132.

<sup>57</sup>Bell, *Love Theory*, 17-18.

youth) at the hands of those performers nurtured on and trained in songs and romances, i.e., the singing girls? "The cleverest of them know by heart four thousand songs and more... They are all on such subjects as adultery, procuring '*ishq* [passionate love], youthful dalliance, yearning desire and amorous passion."<sup>58</sup> In Jāhiz's epistle on singing-girls, the seductiveness of the singing-girls mirrors that of their songs, and the songs are romance verses set to music. Al-Jāhiz notes how Majnūn's poetry is performed by a singing-girl as part of her repertoire of tricks and wiles employed in trapping her clients.

When she encounters [the lover's name], she quotes Majnūn's verse,

*I love every name that is the same as hers, or like  
it, or in any way resembles it.*

If anyone calls out the name, she quotes Majnūn's other lines,

*Often has someone called out, when we were on  
Mina's slopes, and has stirred unwittingly my heart's  
griefs; he has called by the name of Laylā someone  
other than my love, and it was as though by [the  
very word] 'Laylā' he caused a bird in my breast  
to fly up.<sup>59</sup>*

Muslim orthodoxy well recognized that speech and song incited desire

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<sup>58</sup> "The training of singing-girls," 'Amr b. Bahr al-Jāhiz, The Life and Works of Jāhiz, trans. Charles Pellat. Trans. from French by D. M. Hawke (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) 267.

<sup>59</sup> A. F. L. Beeston, trans., The Epistle on Singing-Girls of Jāhiz, Approaches to Arabic Literature, No. 2 (England: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 1980) 33. The Epistle on Singing-Girls is considered to be al-Jāhiz's response to accusations of moral turpitude among the elite youth--turpitude alleged to be linked to their exposure to these women.

since listening to “amatory verse and song” was regarded by it as one of the primary causes of ‘falling in love.’<sup>60</sup> Discursive activity of any sort bred desire and it was believed that “those who indulge in reading lovers’ tales, reciting delicate verse, and listening to sad music are especially vulnerable.”<sup>61</sup>

### Al-Isfahānī and Narrative Errancy

Patricia Parker suggests that a congruence may be found between a romance character’s mental, moral, geographic deviations, on the one hand, and the narrative “de-viations” in the romance genre, on the other hand.<sup>62</sup> Parker points out how “all...spatial metaphors for error have their narrative counterparts--deviation, diversion, and digression.”<sup>63</sup> Majnūn’s inability to stay on a straight path, his deviations from an “elevated path,” have their counterpart in the primary narrator’s (al-Isfahānī) comments. In the introduction to his magnum opus, the Kitāb al Aghānī or Book of Songs, al-Isfahānī justifies his methods of composition and what is striking about his methods is the importance he assigns to divagation or digression.

...moving from one thing to another [love of this] is in the nature of good spirit. What one digresses to is more pleasurable than what one moves from. The anticipated is more charismatic to the heart than that which is present.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Acc to Ibn al-Jawzī, “another cause [besides *nazar*] of ‘*ishq* is listening to amatory verse and song (*sama*’). This activity engraves images on the heart which the faculty of vision then proceeds to find beautiful.” Bell, Love Theory, 36.

<sup>61</sup>Giffen, Theory of Profane Love, 141.

<sup>62</sup>Parker, Inescapable Romance, 6.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>64</sup>Kitāb al-Aghānī, 1: 4.

Probably no better example of a practitioner of the rhetorics attacked by prophet Muḥammad can be found than the very composer/compiler of the romance of Majnūn Laylā. Al-Isfahānī, in the above statement, privileges the deferral. Certainly, if what one moves to is always more pleasurable than what one departs from, then one will always be moving and never arriving. He foregrounds the pleasure of anticipation. The analogies to the privileging of *'ishq* over *wasl*, of desire over desire's fulfillment, are evident.

Al-Isfahānī's errant mode in both the composition and suggested reading of Kitāb al-Aghānī is most visible in one of its "songs," the romance of Majnūn Laylā. In his rendering of this romance, he resists any monopoly on a single narrative theme, meaning or interpretation. The multiple beginnings, story lines, and digressions that characterize the romance suspend any linear expectations. Al-Isfahānī, in his arrangement and presentation of material, accents the ambiguities in what happened--in matters such as how the lovers met and why Majnūn went mad. Moreover, he emphasizes the discontinuities of character to undercut a univocal interpretation of the story.

This peripatetic reading is further encouraged by al-Isfahānī through the use of a multiplicity of genres in his composition. His chivalric desire to please induces him to counsel the reader "to browse freely and wander between seriousness and jest, *āthār* and *akhbār*, biography, poetry, stories, all connected with the glorious times of the Arabs, times concerning the

lives of the kings of Jāhiliya and caliphs of Islam.”<sup>65</sup> He encourages meandering between genres (e.g., between poetry and prose) and notes, for example, that if he had included only poetry set to music and not gone beyond this, “it would have been rough on the spirit, boring for the heart.”<sup>66</sup> In the romance too, he alternates between seriousness (*jidd*) and jest (*hazl*) in certain parts. For example, an anecdote humorously punning on the word ‘lambs’ (*bahm*) follows a poem in which this word is part of its symbolism.

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 1: 1-2.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

## Chapter 6: Female Unchastity and the Erotic Triangle

In Chapter Two, I discussed how the 'Udhri romance of Majnūn Laylā dramatizes a theme of the tragic impugment of female chastity. In this chapter, I will argue that this theme is undercut by a latent more powerful subtext in which female unchastity, or the lover's exposure of the female as secret, is sensualized. The 'Udhri romances ostensibly foreground a monagamous bond between a pair of lovers, but a close scrutiny of these tales reveals that a third party is always present and that the configuration of erotic bonds is actually triangular and scarcely chaste.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, I examine the existence of the love triangle and its relation to female unchastity in the 'Udhri love stories, specifically in the Majnūn Laylā romance.

Paradoxically, only an unchaste or exposed woman is insured existence in the 'Udhri romance genre. I will demonstrate this through a discussion of the third-party role but even the dialectic of secrecy and revelation characterizing these love stories suggests that ultimately it is the unchastity, rather than the chastity of the 'Udhri beloved, that is deemed desirable. Secrecy is of primary importance in the male view of what constitutes female chastity. In this view, the veiling and concealment of a woman's body is explicitly linked with the preservation of her chastity.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Certainly, the existence of the erotic triangle in romance and lyric is a well-documented fact. Sigmund Freud's essays "A Special Type of Object Choice Made by Men" and "The Taboo of Virginity" help illuminate some aspects of this triangle. Sigmund Freud, Sexuality and the Psychology of Love, Ed. Philip Rieff (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1963).

<sup>2</sup>A number of Qur'ānic references to female modesty and chastity are literally references to the concealment and protection of female genitalia.



Once female chastity is defined in terms of secrecy, then its violation (that is, the divulgence of a beloved as secret) is rendered an inevitability given the dialectic of the secret (i.e., a secret is not a secret until it is revealed). Importantly, this divulgence is sensualized: only a woman that has been unveiled by a male lover is deemed desirable enough to exist in the love story, and desirable enough to merit a husband. It is worth noting that the romance genre, in the Arab context, often assigns revelation the male gender just as it assigns secrecy the female gender. Since secrecy plays such an important role in the male lover's perception and experience of female sexuality, secrecy itself becomes gendered as feminine.<sup>3</sup>

Structurally, there exist two types of triangular configurations. Both involve a situation whereby the 'Udhri lover 'tragically loses' his beloved to a third-party. In the first type of configuration, the poet-lover may be either married or betrothed to his beloved, and then suddenly, he loses her to another man. We see this occur in the romances of Qays Lubnā and 'Urwa 'Afra. In the second more prevalent type, the 'Udhri lover, though not formally attached to his beloved, symbolically or verbally 'possesses' her through the notoriety of his verse, and then loses her to a third party precisely because of his transgression (e.g., Majnūn Laylā, Jamīl Buthaynah). In both cases, the third party to whom the 'Udhri lover loses his beloved marries the woman in question.

Whether a man is shown attached to or courting a woman, he is

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See, for example 24:30-31, 4:51, and 21:91.

<sup>3</sup>The etymology of *sirr* indicates this: the fifth and tenth form of the verb *sarra* (derived from *sirr*) mean 'to take to oneself a [female] concubine-slave.' A *surriyya* is a female concubine-slave and a *sirriyya* is 'a free woman with whom one has sexual intercourse secretly' or a prostitute.

always losing her to another man such that it seems a woman is not meant to be kept by one man but circulated, both literally and figuratively, among men. Often, a man's speech with a woman or about a woman mars her chastity, and as soon as this occurs he 'passes' her to another man.

Two levels may be discerned within the text of the 'Udhri romance. On a surface level, speech with or about a woman is rendered taboo, for as soon as the lover speaks about her, he tragically loses her to another man. A lover's revelation of a beloved is shown to have tragic consequences. But on a more fundamental level, speech about a woman is what permits bonding between men, whether the relations are between male poets, or between poets and husbands. In a sense, her unchastity facilitates a type of homosocial (even homoerotic) bonding between men. Only ostensibly is speech about a woman being made taboo, because actually such speech acts as the medium through which men bond with each other. This homosocial bonding between men is thus only made possible at the tragic expense of the heterosexual relation between the lover and beloved. The dramatizing of a woman's reputed loss of chastity, the rendering of this loss as tragic, functions to conceal the homosocial/homoerotic components in the romances.

### **Hafsah and her Husbands**

I begin with an anecdote cited by al-Jāhiz in his Risālāt al-Qiyān or Epistle on Singing Girls, that illuminates certain aspects of the love triangles in Majnūn Laylā and the other 'Udhri love stories.

Al-Jāhiz relates:

Al-Hasan b. 'Alī married Hafsah bint 'Abd al-Rahman; but al

Mundhir b. al-Zubayr was in love with her. Now something [of gossip] about her reached al-Ḥasan, so he divorced her. Al-Mundhir then proposed to her, but she refused him, saying, 'He has exposed [*shahaharni*] me.' 'Āsim b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭab then asked to wed her, and she married him.<sup>4</sup> But al-Mundhir conveyed some scandal about her to 'Āsim and he divorced her, and al-Mundhir then asked to marry her. It was now said to her, 'Marry him so that people learn that he slandered you.' So she married him, and people realized that he had lied about her. Then al-Ḥasan told 'Āsim to ask al-Mundhir for permission for him to visit her and have a talk with her [*yadkhulu ilayha wa yatahaddathu 'indaha*]. They did this, and al-Mundhir sought the counsel of this brother 'Abdallah, who told him to let them in. So they came in, and she paid more attention to 'Āsim than to al-Ḥasan, for he was more at ease in conversation. Then, al-Ḥasan said to al-Mundhir, 'Take your wife's hand'; he did so, and al-Ḥasan and 'Āsim got up and left. But al-Ḥasan was in love with her, and he had only divorced her because al-Mundhir had levelled a charge [against her]. One day, al-Ḥasan said to Ibn Abī 'Atīq, 'How about a trip to 'Aqīq?'<sup>5</sup> They started out, but al-Ḥasan turned aside to Ḥafsah's house and went in to [see] her, and they had a long conversation before he came out. Later on, he said to Ibn Abī 'Atīq, 'How about a trip to 'Aqīq?', to which he agreed. But al-Ḥasan [again] stopped at Ḥafsah's house and went in. At another time, he said the same thing, but Ibn Abī 'Atīq said, 'Brother, why do you not

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<sup>4</sup>With reference to early Islamic marriage practices, Gertrude Stern notes that "the constant use of *khalafa* is significant. It is generally used to denote the second or subsequent marriages of a woman, a certain man is said 'to succeed' to a certain woman...The constant use of the term points to a frequent interchange of wives." Gertrude Stern, *Marriage in Early Islam*, Vol. XVIII (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1939) 72.

<sup>5</sup> According to J. Stet: "[Aqīq] is a metaphor of sweetness, joy, and garden surroundings, too, and it is a poetic convention." Stetkevych, *Zephyrs*, 112. "Aqīq" literally means "a cleft, split, slit, ripped or rent; and cut; any channel which the water of a torrent has cloven; a valley; pools of water in cleft furrows; red sand or clay." Lane's *Lexicon*.

just say, How about a trip to Hafsah?'<sup>6</sup>

There are many striking features about this passage. Among the most striking is that a (marital) relation between two parties--a man and a woman--is repeatedly disrupted and the form of disruption is always the introduction of a male third party.

Another way of expressing this is that Hafsah is made the object of a man's desire only when she is attached to another man. First, she is the object of al-Mundhir's desire when she is al-Hasan's wife. Then, she, who was the object of al-Mundhir's desire when married to al-Hasan, suddenly becomes the object of al-Hasan's desire once she is married to al-Mundhir. This phenomenon of each of the two men (al-Mundhir and al-Hasan) desiring Hafsah whenever she is attached to the other suggests that a homoerotic component is present in the men's relations. Susan Crane has observed that "a...way of building courtship into men's relations is the triangulated erotic rivalry of two men for one woman."<sup>7</sup>

It is also striking that the marriage of al-Mundhir, which spells the end of his courtship of Hafsah, ends his primacy in the romance narrative. Only while he is the third party who is interested in Hafsah, a married woman, is the narrative focus of the anecdote upon him. But once the marriage between al-Mundhir and Hafsah takes place, and al-Mundhir is no longer the third party, the narrative suddenly shifts attention from him to al-Hasan. Al-Hasan (the former husband) usurps al-Mundhir's role as the potential third party lover once the latter marries her, and accordingly, he

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<sup>6</sup>Beeston, trans. Epistle, 19.

<sup>7</sup>Crane, Gender and Romance, 49.

also usurps al-Mundhir's place in the narrative.

In Majnūn Laylā and in the other 'Udhri love stories, the third party role initially is enacted by the 'Udhri lover; however, it is subsequently usurped by the beloved's husband or another rival suitor. In the beginning, the romance under consideration is characterised by a triangular configuration that consists of the beloved, her father and Majnūn as the lover, but once Laylā marries Ward ibn Thaqif, this configuration takes the form of the beloved, the lover and the husband. What is noteworthy is that the romance plot always depicts the beloved as either being in the possession of or becoming the possession of a man other than the 'Udhri lover (be this man the beloved's father or husband). Majnūn cannot marry his beloved, for marriage to her would mean the end of the triangle and therefore the end of the lover's centrality in this narrative.<sup>8</sup> The 'Udhri lover continues endlessly to desire his beloved because the narrative mandates his remaining center stage in the romance. The beloved's continuing inaccessibility to Majnūn—symbolized in her attachment to, first, a father, and then, a husband—becomes a narrative imperative in the romance. This is an important reason why the slandered woman in Majnūn Laylā does not marry her slanderer, whereas in anecdote cited above she does marry the man who slanders her. Unlike the character of al-Mundhir in the aforecited anecdote, Majnūn cannot relinquish his primacy in the romance narrative.

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<sup>8</sup>Catherine Bates notes that in western comedy, "the curtain traditionally falls at the point when courtship ends and when the lovers marry... Nothing remains to write about since, as Congreve put it, courtship is to marriage as 'a very witty prologue to a very dull play.'" Bates, The Rhetoric of Courtship, 20.

Yet another feature that is made prominent in the anecdote is the importance of language in the bonds that link members of the love triangles. Here, the links between speech and sex, between conversation and sexual desire, are very pronounced. Ḥafsah's circulation among her husbands parallels the circulation of slanderous speech about her among her husbands. An 'unchaste' woman is bandied from one man to another because unchaste speech about her is passed from one man to another. The desire of al-Mundhir, the principal slanderer, for Ḥafsah is both generated and then expressed through his 'unchaste' speech about her to her husbands. As occurs with Laylā in the Majnūn Laylā romance, Ḥafsah is exposed and maligned through al-Mundhir's speech. The verb that Ḥafsah uses in describing how al-Mundhir has scandalized her is *shahhara* which means 'to divulge, to publicize,' and in the romance of Majnūn Laylā too, this verb frequently is employed to describe Majnūn's indiscretions regarding Laylā. In this anecdote also, it is the very act of a man's revelation, of putting to expression his desire for a woman, that mars her virgin reputation. Unchaste speech is the vector that links al-Mundhir to Ḥafsah, on the one hand, and al-Mundhir to her husbands, on the other hand. Conversely, unchaste speech about Ḥafsah ruptures the marital bond between her and al-Ḥasan, her first husband, but subsequently, enhances her as an object of desire in his eyes. Once Ḥafsah is married to al-Mundhir, she then becomes the object of al-Ḥasan's desire and the partner of his conversation.

Once al-Ḥasan, her former husband, experiences a renewal of desire for Ḥafsah, he seeks to express it by creating opportunities to talk to and converse with her. The passage shows him visiting her at least three times,

and on each occasion, what the narrative stresses is that he converses with her or that they both converse. Another indication of the link between sex and speech is made evident through the narrative's repeated coupling of the verb *dakhala* (to visit, to enter, to go in) with *haddatha* (to converse), especially since the semantic range of the root of *dakhala* also includes the meaning of 'to go into a woman, to have intercourse.' The equivalences between speech and sex are also obvious in the passage's description of the initial meeting between Ḥafsah and her ex-husbands: "So they came in, and she paid more attention to 'Āsim than to al-Ḥasan, for he was more at ease in conversation. Then, al-Ḥasan said to al-Mundhir, 'Take your wife's hand'; he did so, and al-Ḥasan and 'Āsim got up and left." Here, Ḥafsah is depicted flirting with 'Āsim as a consequence of his verbal prowess in conversation. This arouses the jealousy of al-Ḥasan (and jealousy here intermingles with sexual desire), such that he feels compelled to ask Ḥafsah's husband to make a display of his sexual ownership of her by 'taking her hand,' thus forcing the two former husbands to disengage themselves from her and to take leave.

Importantly, we notice how the scene of this meeting between Ḥafsah and her ex-husbands demonstrates a point made earlier -- that just as soon as an interaction between a woman and a man, between Ḥafsah and 'Āsim, appears promising, the narrative finds a means to disrupt it. Here, the disruption is exemplified in al-Ḥasan's requesting the intervention of the husband.

In the 'Udhri romances, too, a depiction of a dyadic relation or interaction is often disrupted or extended to include a third party. The

interaction may be between a man and a woman or between two men but the narrative simply does not rest easy with this communication between two parties. Only the addition of a third party 'completes' the narrative scene. Regardless of the initial pairing, the resulting triangular configuration is almost always that of two men and one woman (or group of women).

### The Poet-Visitor and the Triangle

Next, I discuss two different narratives that present triangulated configurations involving a poet-visitor as well as the romance characters of poet-lover and beloved. The narratives are selected from the Aghānī renditions of the 'Udhri romances of Majnūn Laylā and Jamīl Buthaynah, respectively. In the first configuration, the romance poet sends a fellow poet (poet-visitor) to visit his beloved.<sup>9</sup> In the second, a fellow poet appoints himself as a visitor to the romance poet's beloved. As discussed elsewhere, the visit is a distinct component of courtship in the medieval Arabic romances. If a lover's visit to the beloved has erotic significance, it may be inferred that a lover's friend's visit to the beloved is also laden with such significance. What is interesting is that the visit in each of the two stories marks the disruption (followed by the extension) of a rather cozy interaction between two men, between the romance's poet-lover and his fellow poet-visitor. In both cases, the interaction between two men (i.e., the romance poet and the poet-visitor) is extended to include an exchange

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<sup>9</sup>There are also numerous triangulations involving messengers and envoys who are not poets (e.g., the traveler or the slavewoman who acts as a carrier of messages between the lover and beloved).



between a man and a woman (i.e., between the poet-visitor and the romance poet's beloved). Always hovering around each exchange between visitor and beloved is the shadow of the bond between the beloved and her lover who has dispatched the visitor in the first place.

In the first configuration, from the Majnūn Laylā romance, Majnūn and a fellow poet, Qays ibn Dharīḥ, are portrayed as meeting and bonding with each other after a long time. Then Majnūn asks the latter to visit his beloved, Laylā.

Qays ibn Dharīḥ came across Majnūn while he was sitting by himself in his tribe's assembly place (*nādī*). Each of them had been longing to meet the other. Majnūn, before becoming a wild man, used to sit by himself only and not talk to anyone, nor respond to anyone addressing him, nor greet anyone greeting him. Then, Qays ibn Dharīḥ greeted him and he leapt up and hugged him, saying: Hello to you, my brother! By God, I am of unsound mind and preoccupied, so do not pain me. The two talked for awhile and commiserated and wept with one another. Then, Majnūn said to him: My brother, Laylā's encampment is nearby. Would you go to her and convey to her my greetings? He said to him: I will do it. So Qays ibn Dharīḥ proceeded until he reached Laylā, then he greeted her and made his genealogical introductions. She said to him: Greetings to you. Do you need anything? He said: Yes, your paternal cousin sent me to you with his *salāms*. She bowed her head in silence and then said: You would not have been greeted had I known that you were his messenger. (93-94)

The homosocial bonding between Majnūn and his fellow poet (also, his bard) is foregrounded in this passage. Through the mention of how they have been yearning to meet each other, through the emphasis on the disparity between how Majnūn ignores all people around him and how

enthusiastically he receives Qays, as well as through the portrayal of how they “commiserated and wept with one another,” the intimacy shared by them is made prominent. Then, suddenly, the narrative focus shifts from the relation between Qays and Majnūn to the interaction between Qays and Majnūn’s beloved, Laylā. The passage executes this shift by depicting Majnūn as asking his ‘brother’ to visit Laylā.

The question arises, why does the narrative do this? In other words, why is Majnūn shown suddenly to be desiring that Qays visit his beloved? There is no tryst to be confirmed, no message to be conveyed except greetings. The conveyance of greetings appears to be a pretext for something else.

To probe the reasons for this narrative shift, we examine the passage cited below from the romance of Jamīl Buthaynah. This passage is preceded by a scene in which Jamīl and ‘Umar ibn Abī Rabi’a, a rakish love poet (and not an ‘Udhri poet), are depicted meeting and trading verses with each other, much like the portrayal of the meeting between Majnūn and Qays. Again, rather abruptly, the narrative focus jumps from an account of the interaction between the two poets to a description of an exchange involving ‘Umar and Jamīl’s beloved, Buthaynah. In contrast to what happens in the Majnūn Laylā anecdote, ‘Umar himself takes the liberty of deciding to visit Jamīl’s beloved. He designates himself as a messenger and asks Jamīl to accompany him on a visit to Buthaynah. Jamīl declines and urges ‘Umar to go visit her nonetheless, and when ‘Umar arrives at Buthaynah’s camp and meets her, she has a surprising announcement for him.

Then ‘Umar said to him: accompany me to Buthaynah’s so that we may offer [her] our greetings. Jamīl replied: The sultan has already

declared my blood legal if they [her folk] find me there, so you betake yourself to her tents. 'Umar set out until he reached her abode, and [once there], he made himself sociable until he was spoken to. [When addressed] he stated: O lass, I am 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a, hence, apprise Buthaynah of my presence (*makānī*). Buthaynah then came out to him...and said: By God, 'Umar, I am not among those women of yours which insist that passion for you has slain them! So, 'Umar was routed.<sup>10</sup>

Again, the question arises, why does the narrative show 'Umar as desiring to visit another poet-lover's beloved? It is unlikely that 'Umar's desire to visit Buthaynah is simply out of his sense of companionship with Jamīl. That he may have an amorous agenda--perhaps latent--is suggested by Buthaynah's announcement to him once he encounters her. She summarily announces to him that she is not part of his female cortege, that she is not one of the many women slain by love for him.

In effect, Buthaynah signals to 'Umar that she is Jamīl's supreme 'Udhri beloved and not 'Umar's latest love victim. Actually, 'Umarī poetry and narratives may present an inverse of the 'Udhri position on the relation between the beloved and lover. In the 'Udhri romances, the male poet-lover is the one to be slain and the woman is the slayer, whereas in the 'Umarī material, the male lover frequently occupies the role of the slayer and his female paramours are the ones to be slain. Bouhdiba and other critics have noted how, whereas "in bedouin love, we have the beloved, desired woman who is impossible to possess...in the urban view, we have the vainglory and swagger of the lover, desired by the ladies, but himself haughty, insensitive

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<sup>10</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah in the Aghānī, 8: 144.

and blase.”<sup>11</sup>

The probability that ‘Umar’s visit to Buthaynah has erotic undertones induces us to consider whether Qays’ visit to Laylā is characterized by such undertones too. True, that ‘Umar is a self-appointed visitor of Buthaynah, but he does obtain Jamīl’s backing for his venture. Jamīl, in a sense, is complicit in ‘Umar’s amorous foray because he not only declines the latter’s request to go with him but urges him to visit Buthaynah anyway. Qays, unlike ‘Umar, is appointed as visitor/messenger to Laylā by Majnūn himself. But it is what precedes each visit that sheds light on its homoerotic nature.

What prefaces Qays’ visit to Laylā and ‘Umar’s visit to Buthaynah is an intense exchange of intimacy between the two male poet-lovers in each narrative. Just as Majnūn and Qays are shown celebrating the bond between them, likewise Jamīl and ‘Umar are depicted swapping verses with each other and marvelling over each other’s poetic abilities. Jamīl is shown fawning over ‘Umar’s poetic language. The answer to the question of why the narrative depicts Majnūn as suddenly wishing for Qays to visit his beloved or portrays ‘Umar as desiring to visit another poet-lover’s beloved is simply that narrative necessitates the completion of the erotic triangle. In other words, the narrative has Qays dispatched to Laylā, and ‘Umar dispatched to Buthaynah immediately after each of the two pairs of male poets have been having a cozy *tete-à-tete* because it is at that juncture that each poet-visitor has the ‘license’ to model or mimic intimacy with the romance lover’s beloved. It is just after Majnūn and Qays have

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<sup>11</sup> Bouhdiba, Sexuality in Islam, 111.

commiserated soulfully over their plights as lover-poets, that the former desires his 'Udhri partner model to have a conversation with his beloved. The narrative seems to necessitate the addition of a third relation soon after a renewal of relations between the fellow poets. Hence, it introduces a 'visit motif' that leads to an interaction between the fellow poet and the beloved of the romance.

But the beloved, in each passage, is a rather uncooperative member of the homoerotic triangle. Buthaynah immediately rejects 'Umar's overture and Laylā initially tells Qays that she would not have even greeted him had she known that he had been sent by Majnūn, her lover.

### Beauty, Beast, and the Triangle

The love story of Qays Lubnā is among the most effective illustrations of the importance of the third party motif in the 'Udhri corpus.<sup>12</sup> Unlike other 'Udhri stories, the Qays Lubnā romance has Qays first marry his beloved, Lubnā, and then divorce her. Soon after the divorce, Qays hears that Lubnā has remarried, and broken-heartedly regrets having given her up to another man. In the account cited below, he suddenly discovers that he has symbolically re-enacted this transfer of his wife by unwittingly selling his she-camel to the man that is now her husband. This anecdote is found in the Kitab al-Aghānī version of the story

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<sup>12</sup> In the Qays Lubnā romance as recorded in the Aghānī, triangulations proliferate. Among the most prominent are Qays-Lubnā-husband (Lubnā's second husband), as well as Qays-Lubnā-wife (Qays' second wife, from the tribe of Fazāra, who is also named Lubnā!). See Hilary Kilpatrick, "Aḥbār Manzūma: The Romance of Qays and Lubnā in the Agānī," Festschrift Ewald Wagner Zum 65. Geburtstag, Studien zur Arabischen Dichtung, Band 2 (Beirut: Beiruter Texte Und Studien, 1994) 351-361.

but not Ibn Qutayba's rendition.

... Qays took his camels and proceeded with them to the city. He had just begun to exhibit them when Lubnā's husband started bargaining with him for a she-camel...[but] they did not recognize one another. So he sold her to him. Then [Lubnā's] husband said to him: When morn arrives, stop by the abode of Kathīr ibn al-Saltī and get your money. [Qays] said: Fine. Lubnā's husband went to her and said: I have purchased a she-camel from a man of Bedouin folk and he is coming tomorrow to get the money for her, so prepare a meal for him.<sup>13</sup> So she did. When it was morning, Qays arrived and called out to the servant: Tell your master that the owner of the she-camel is by the door. Lubnā then recognized the tone of his voice but did not say a thing. Her husband said to the servant: Tell him to enter. He entered and sat down. Lubnā said to the servant: Say to him, 'O young man, why is it that you appear so dishevelled and dusty?' She [the servant] said this to him. He took a deep breath and spoke to her: Such is the condition of one who has forsaken love and chosen death over life. And he wept. Next, Lubnā said to her: Tell him 'Talk to us about yourself.' When he began to converse, she lifted the curtain and announced: Enough! We already know your account. And she dropped the curtain. He remained speechless for awhile, not talking, then he suddenly burst out weeping and arose and exited. Her husband called out to him: Woe to thee! What is your story? Come back and get the price for your she-camel, and if you want, we will increase it for you. [Qays] did not speak to him...[but] mounted his stirrup and left. Lubnā said to her husband: Alas! That was Qays ibn Dharīh. How can you bear what you did to him? He said: I did not recognize him. On the way, Qays began to cry and bewail himself...for what he had done.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The contrast between Qays, a Bedouin camel-seller, and Lubnā's husband, a townsman is made quite stark in this passage.

<sup>14</sup>Qays Lubnā in the Aghānī, 9: 144.

We notice that, in the passage's beginning, the triangulation takes the form of two men and a female animal and the narrative focus is mainly upon the interaction between the two men, Qays and Lubnā's husband. Then, in the second-half of the passage, a woman, Lubnā, is substituted for the female animal and the focus of the narrative shifts to an exchange between this woman and a man. Just as, in the anecdotes cited earlier, the visit marked the disruption or extension of the male-male interaction to include a male-female one, in this narrative, the sale or exchange of the she-camel symbolically inaugurates the addition of a male-female interaction to the existing one between the two men.

Lubnā's role in the male-female exchange is noteworthy. She is shown first baiting the lover into deliberately relating his tale of love's woes, and then curtly silencing him through the revelation of her identity to him: "She lifted the curtain and said: Enough! We already know your account." In a sense, she rebukes him for peddling a story about her after he has already peddled her as a woman (i.e., divorced her). Here it may be pointed out that, unlike what occurs in the Majnūn Laylā romance, Lubnā is bandied from one man to another before gossip about her is peddled, whereas Laylā, on the other hand, is circulated after scandalous speech about her is peddled. Lubnā, in the narrative quoted above, diminishes the lover's rhetoric because she is tired of it, especially since his rhetoric ultimately is more about a self-love than a love of her. Not surprisingly, given that the passage began with a dialogue between the two men, Lubnā's husband, unlike Lubnā, is interested in hearing all of Qays' story; "Woe to thee! What is your story? Come back and get the price....," he shouts to

Qays. Lubnā, by contrast, does not want to be the audience for a tale that peddles her as a featured attraction. Lubnā's action here appears similar to that of Laylā in the Majnūn Laylā anecdote in which she silences Majnūn's conversation by turning her attention away from him and toward another man.

### **The Lover Spurned is the Lover Spurred**

The narrative in which Laylā leaves Majnūn speechless by suddenly ignoring him and flirting with another man is actually the second of two consecutive anecdotes in which Majnūn is spurned by his female audience. In the first, not just one woman (Laylā) but a bevy of young women lose interest in the poet when another man, a goatherd, appears in the scene. It is always toward a male third party, whether it is the goatherd or the man to whom Laylā whispers a secret in the two anecdotes to be discussed shortly or Lubnā's husband in the quotation cited above, that the women are shown turning. In the following two anecdotes, quoted once again, it is Majnūn who has to contend with a third party.

In the first anecdote, the scene is described thus:

He passed by a woman from his tribe, known as Karima, and with her was a group of women chattering and among them was Laylā. They [the women] were pleased by his beauty and perfection, so they invited him to dismount and converse. He dismounted and began to talk with them and he ordered a slave of his that was with him to slay for them his [al-Majnūn's] she-camel and he did so. He continued to converse with them for the remainder of the day. While he was so [doing], there appeared before them a young man, wearing a Bedouin garment, who was known as Munāzil, and [who] was driving some of his goats. When they saw him, they drew near to him



and abandoned al-Majnūn. Thus, he became angry and departed from them reciting: (12-13)

*Do I slay my she-camel for the sake of Karīma,  
and then find that my arrival paved the way for the arrival of  
Munāzil?!*

*When he arrived, they tinkled their ornaments,  
yet when I came,  
I was not given the pleasure of those anklets' sound*

Another version of this narrative continues thus:

The youth said: Come on! Let us duel and engage in a shooting match with each other! [Majnūn] said to him: If you wish that, then move to [a place] where you cannot see them and they cannot see you. Then whatever you wish, do. And he recited:

*If we vie in a vacant place, I will overcome him,  
But if he shoots his arrow in front of her,  
then he is the winner over me. (30)*

In a variant of the anecdote subsequent to this, it is related He came upon Laylā sitting in the courtyard of her abode. Love for him had cleaved to her heart and she desired him. She had maidservants that were talking with her and he halted by them and greeted them. Then they invited him to dismount and said to him: How would you like to have a talk with someone who is not distracted from you by the likes of Munāzil? He said: Fine. He alighted and did what he had done the day before. She wanted to know--did he feel for her what she felt for him--so she began to turn away from his discourse time and time again and to talk with others. [Indeed] already there was in his heart love for her similar to her love for him, and he was enamored of her and found her pretty and engaging. While she was talking to him, there appeared, at that

time, a young man from the tribal quarter. Then, she summoned him [the young man] and whispered to him a long secret. (30-31)

Again, just when the situation appears to be promising between the male lover and his female fans, in both anecdotes, it is disrupted through the arrival of a third party, i.e., a male rival. In other words, it is exactly when the scene between the poet and the women suggests that the latter have been captivated by his appearance and rhetorical skills and he by their charm, that the romance narrative disrupts the harmony and introduces the presence of another man. Once the poet's courteous speech initiates his courtship of Laylā (or the women), along comes another man to claim her attention. Importantly, this other man always appears.

Here, the function of the third party's arrival partly is to displace the women's (or beloved's) attention away from the central male figure onto the new male arrival. This displacement, in turn, simply spurs the desire of the poet-lover. Thus, the appearance of a third-party rival lover ultimately functions to enhance Majnūn's desire for the women. The appearance of a rival third party makes him unbearably jealous and angry, and he is chiefly angry because of the women's shift of attention away from him. What also infuriates Majnūn is that it is the women who actively desire or shun the men. Certainly, from the male lover's viewpoint, "...the preferred female sexuality would be one which responded to the desire of others, rather than one which actively desired and sought a response."<sup>15</sup> This explains why the women are the target of his unflattering verses; they are at fault for being capricious and inconstant: *When he [Munāzil] arrived, they tinkled their*

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<sup>15</sup>Sedgewick, Between Men, 182.

*ornaments, yet when I came, I was not given the pleasure of those anklets' sound.* Ironically, the threat of combat between the two men arises, in part, because of these verses. Munāzil views the couplet and the angry manner in which Majnūn declaims it as an affront to both him and the women, and he chivalrously rises to the occasion by issuing a challenge to the poet.

Majnūn's injunction to Munāzil to withdraw from the presence of the women belies his own anxiety about engaging in combat in front of the women.<sup>16</sup> By stressing that he would lose the battle were the women to watch Munāzil, Majnūn implies that a display of physical prowess against an uncouth, randy Bedouin in front of the female audience would somehow detract from his refined status as a poet-lover. He feels compelled to maintain a kind of genteel, delicate presence in front of the women, a presence that would not allow him to win a physical struggle with another man. The aspect of his identity--the persona of a sentimental, swooning lover that he so carefully cultivates in the presence of women--appears under threat if he were to engage in a combative struggle. Such a display of physical prowess would also somehow undermine the importance of his image as a refined poet-lover. Munāzil, being a low-class goat-herd, does not have to concern himself with these issues.

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<sup>16</sup>Regarding the combat scene in this anecdote, it may be noted that Susan Crane has argued that courtship between men and women has antecedents in the combative and fraternal relations between men-- "courtship appears...[to be] an overt sexualizing and regendering of chivalry's combative and fraternal components." Crane, Gender and Romance, 48.

The numerous anecdotes cited in the following section are linked by one important factor: the triangulated exchange in them is based primarily on speech. In most of these narratives, the beloved is only evoked in the triangle through men's speech about her. The beloved is present in the triangle only semiotically. Two exceptions are the first two narratives to be cited, in which the character of a woman is actually represented in the triangle.

### Butter, Blood, and the Triangle

In the two passages quoted below, the triangulated exchanges occur between the characters of the lover, the beloved, and her father/husband. The first passage is from the romance of Majnūn Laylā and the second has been selected from Kuthayyir 'Azzah, another 'Udhri love story. What is immediately obvious are the structural and symbolic parallels between the two narratives despite certain differences. Among the more curious parallels between the two quotations is the important role of butter<sup>17</sup> (*samn*), as a

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<sup>17</sup>In these two passages, the word *samn* also could be interpreted to signify both chaste (secret) speech and chaste femininity. The word *samīn*, morphologically related to *samun*, means 'fat, chaste, abundant.' *Kalīm samīn* means 'chaste speech' as well as 'chaste, eloquent or excellent language.' Arab literary critics of the Middle Ages, like Ibn Qutayba, often described language using corporeal words such as 'fat' and 'lean.' In Ta'wīl, Ibn Qutayba contrasts the terms *samīn* and *ghaththa* with reference to language: the former means 'plump or good language,' whereas the latter means 'lean language' and 'bad speech.' Ibn Qutayba, Ta'wīl, 11. Language that is characterized as *samīn* is speech that is rich in allegorical and metaphorical meanings. Such language is also described as 'chaste' precisely because it is full of concealed allegorical meanings, and chastity, we must remember, is intimately connected with secrecy in the medieval Arabic discourse on love. Some of Suzanne Stetkevych's work suggests that

symbolic commodity, in the triangulated exchanges characterizing each.

From Majnūn Laylā, I excerpt the following:

I said to Qays ibn al-Mulawwah before he went mad: What is the most wondrous of things that has struck you in your passion for Laylā? He said: Guests stayed with us [one] night and we did not have any victuals. So my father sent me to Laylā's father's abode, saying to me: Ask of him for food. I went to him and stood [outside] his tent and called out to him. He said: What do you want? I said: We have guests with us tonight but we have no food, so my father sent me to ask you for some fare. He said: Laylā, get out for him that churn and fill his vessel with butter. She took it out and I had with me a wooden cup and then she began to pour the butter in it while we conversed. The conversation distracted us while she poured the butter. The cup became full and we did not realize it and the butter flowed until our legs were [immersed] in [a pool of] butter... (32)

In Kuthayyir 'Azzah, we find:

Kuthayyir (the lover) said: I went for pilgrimage one year, as did 'Azzah's husband with her. No one from [among] us was aware of his companion's [presence]. On the way, her husband commanded her to purchase butter with which to prepare food for the folk of his travelling entourage. She began to go around the tents, tent by tent, until she came to me not knowing it was my tent. I was making arrows. When I saw her, I kept cutting, while I was gazing at her, distractedly until I cut my [flesh down to the] bones several times. I did not feel anything [even though] my blood was flowing. When that became obvious, she came to me and gripped my hand and began to wipe the blood off it with her gown. I had a churn of butter

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the symbolism of a blood vs. milk dichotomy is important in early Arabic literature. S. Stetkevych, Mute, 208-210.

and I made her swear to take it. So she took it and brought the butter to her husband. When he saw the blood, he asked her for information concerning it and she concealed it, until he swore she must tell him the truth and so she did. Then he hit her and swore that she must revile me to my face. So she stopped before me, having him with her, and said to me, weeping: "O son of a whore" and then they left.<sup>18</sup>

Both Laylā's father and 'Azzah's husband are shown asking the female beloved to fetch butter. But the beloved, in each narrative, is unable to deliver the butter without problems, and these problems result from her contact with the lover. At the conclusion of each anecdote, what Laylā's father and 'Azzah's husband are confronted with respectively are spilled butter and splashed blood. Laylā spills the butter as a result of her discourse with Majnūn and 'Azzah stains herself with blood because of her contact with Kuthayyir's wound. Kuthayyir's gaze (the gaze causes him to wound himself) at the beloved 'Azzah is parallel to Majnūn's converse with Laylā. In other words, it is through either the lover's gazing or his speaking with his beloved that the revelation of his desire results, and this revelation of desire is metaphorized as the flowing of blood and the copiousness of conversation. Revelation of the male lover's desire is also foregrounded through the images of his self-mutilation (Kuthayyir cutting himself) and his loss of self-control (Majnūn letting his cup overflow).<sup>19</sup> Both the

<sup>18</sup>Kuthayyir 'Azzah in Aghānī, 9: 29.

<sup>19</sup>Self-mutilation appears to be a standard metaphor in the medieval love discourses. In the Qur'ānic Yūsuf story, the women 'accidentally' cut themselves with knives upon seeing him, knives that have been handed them to cut fruit. Also, there exist parallels between the above Kuthayyir anecdote and a scene from the Tristan romance. In this scene, Tristan's blood stains the bed of his paramour, resulting in the husband's discovery

excessive flow of words from Majnūn to Laylā and the copious flow of blood from Kuthayyir to 'Azzah metaphorize the unchaste disclosure of desire.

Certainly in the second quotation, this male indiscretion symbolically violates the chastity of the beloved. The lover's blood literally stains the beloved's chastity, as signified by the blood-stain on 'Azzah's gown. Interestingly, it is as a consequence of a protective, maternal response from the beloved toward her lover that his bleeding hand stains and brands her gown. That the garment or her gown is stained is important: by staining the gown that clothes and conceals her body, he marks and mars her body. Female secrecy is exposed through the male lover's revelation. The bloodstain becomes the emblem of her unchastity, and the narrative relates that when her husband asks her to explain its presence, she conceals it (i.e., the account of her interaction with Kuthayyir) until he forces her to talk and tell him the truth. However, in the first passage, it is less obvious whether the excess in words between Majnūn and Laylā, symbolized in the overflow of butter, mars the beloved's chastity. It is possible that excess and overflow here may be suggestive of a kind of impurity. Curiously, mainly the women are portrayed as the carriers of the butter in each anecdote. If the butter symbolism is linked with a chaste femininity, then its overflow and spilling into a pool around the lovers' legs--which renders the butter 'unclean' and impure--may be suggestive of a female chastity that has been defiled.

In the anecdote concerning Kuthayyir, it is through the lover's

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of his wife's adultery. Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan and Isolde*, transl. Edwin H. Zeydel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 148-149.

branding of the beloved's body, through the exposure of her secret, that the male-male interaction between the lover and husband is enacted. The blood-stain, which she unsuccessfully tries to conceal, becomes the emblem of her unchastity. 'Azzah functions as a vehicle for an exchange of pornographic signs between the figures of the lover and husband. Not only is she used as a blotter for her lover's blood but she also becomes a conduit for her husband's obscenities, being coerced by him into publicly uttering an epithet in the lover's presence. Hence, female unchastity is both sensationalized and sensualized in the interaction between the men, in the exchange between the lovers and husbands.

Yet, the two narratives somewhat blur the gender roles of the characters of lover and beloved.<sup>20</sup> For example, in a case of reversal, eloquence in language (revelation) is linked with the female beloved and abstruseness of language (secrecy) is connected with the male lover. We notice that it is Laylā who is depicted as pouring the butter into Majnūn's cup. The wooden cup, *qa'b*, that Majnūn holds also has linguistic connotations: *qa'ba al-kalām* means 'to speak abstrusely' and *qa'b al-kalām* means 'depth of speech.' Hence, the beloved is associated with volubility of language and the lover-poet is depicted as the speaker of abstruse or esoteric language. Another instance of the blurring of gender roles lies in the fact that the figures of both the beloved and lover act as the conveyors/purveyors of the butter: in the first anecdote, the beloved Laylā

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<sup>20</sup>The love triangle may also be configured such that the figures of the lover and beloved are merged into one composite feminized character; this character is then linked with the two fathers in the anecdote from Majnūn Laylā, and with 'Azzah's husband and his group of male companions in Kuthayyir 'Azzah.



is shown handing over the butter to her lover, whereas in the second, it is the lover Kuthayyir who is depicted as giving the urn of butter to 'Azzah.

## The Triangle and the Exchange of Secrets and Tropes

### Trading Secrets

In the aforecited narrative from Kuthayyir 'Azzah, the lover and husband exchange the beloved's secret for an obscene epithet. Both secret and epithet are concerned with female sexuality. 'Azzah is the carrier of the sexually charged blood stain from her lover to her husband, and then she again conveys an epithet (concerned with fornication) from her husband to her lover.

The anecdote cited below from the story of Majnūn Laylā also exhibits an exchange between the lover and the beloved's husband. Majnūn's verses, in this quotation, are an example of how the rhapsodizing of a beloved (*tashbīb*) can shade into a satirization (*hijā'*).

[Word] reached Majnūn...that Laylā's husband had spoken of him, reviling and cursing him as well as saying: Has Majnūn's temerity reached [such a degree] that he claims Laylā's love and parades her name? Then [Majnūn], in order to enrage him, recited:

*If there is among you a husband of Laylā it is me--by the Lord of the Throne--I have already kissed her mouth eight times.*

*And I swear by God that I have seen her, when twenty of her fingers were [wrapped] around my back.*

*Is it not an incomparable catastrophe that she was married to that dog and not granted to me? (75)*

Here, Majnūn openly declaims poetry in which he advertises sexual secrets

about his beloved, Laylā, ostensibly so as to insult and antagonize her husband. Lover and husband engage in a verbal joust with each other whereby one publicly divulges female secrets and the other publicly issues obscenities. Divulgence of female secrets is syntactically linked with the utterance of obscenities. The mention of Laylā's 'twenty fingers' in this poem refers to both fingers and toes. The phrase *twenty of her fingers were [wrapped] around my back* evokes a graphic image of the beloved with her fingers and toes entwined around the lover's back. The reference to her mouth having been kissed, not twice, not thrice, but rather eight times conjures up a sexually-laden image of an unsealed female orifice exposed to the lover's repeated caresses. These bodily images of the beloved are her secrets and Majnūn advertises them in retaliation for being made the public target of her husband's invectives. By pandering the beloved's sexual secrets to her husband, the lover partakes in a rivalry (not devoid of homoerotic elements) with the latter. As we shall see, there are certain parallels between the act of a poet-lover publicizing secrets about his beloved to her husband and a poet's declamation of verses about his beloved to a rival poet in love with her. Sharing speech about a beloved is made analagous to sexually sharing the beloved herself. Through this symbolic sharing of a woman, a form of male homoerotic bonding between the rivals is facilitated.

Yet another example of a triangulated exchange involving Majnūn, Laylā's husband and the beloved (or speech about the beloved) is cited below. Majnūn is again shown disclosing intimate secrets about Laylā to her husband in an encounter between them:

Majnūn passed by Laylā's husband, who was sitting, warming

himself by a fire during a chilly day. He [Laylā's husband] had come to Majnūn's neighborhood to [see] his paternal cousin for something. So [the poet] stopped and began to recite:

*By God, have you embraced Laylā shortly  
before dawn or kissed her mouth?  
Have Laylā's tresses gleamed upon you, a  
sprig of chamomile in her bosom?*

Then Majnūn scooped some burning embers in both his palms, letting go of them only when he fell down unconscious. The embers spilled out of the burned palms of his hands and he bit his lips, cutting them. Laylā's husband got up, dismayed and stunned by his action, and walked off.

Here also Majnūn declaims verses in which rhapsody or *tashbib* mingles with satire or *hija*. Not just the erotic nature of the verses, but the very act of declaiming verses about his beloved to another man, especially to her husband, result in the denigration of the beloved. The mention of embracing and kissing his beloved at night as well as the references to her bosom and tresses rather explicitly portray his intimacy with Laylā. His rhetorical use of the interrogative (e.g., "have you...") is an invitation to the husband to engage in a verbal joust over who has a greater claim to intimacy with Laylā. The rhetorical "have you...." actually masks Majnūn's sentiment that 'you [the husband] have not...not like I have.'

As just mentioned, the poet's act of declamation (i.e., Majnūn's declamation of poetry about his beloved) to a man who is himself attached to the beloved has erotic significance. As soon as he ends his declamation to the husband, the poet is shown burning his palms, swooning and biting his

lips--images that are somewhat evocative of a sexual excitement.<sup>21</sup> Through the act of versifying and proclaiming a physical intimacy with Laylā, through the act of performing this in front of the man who is her husband, the poet-lover introduces an element of homoeroticism in the fortuitous encounter between the two men.

Both men are also symbolically linked with Laylā through their contact with the fire. Fire imagery is often employed, in the medieval love discourse, as a metaphor for *'ishq* (passion or desire). But contact with fire, in the passage above, could also act as a metaphor for intimacy with the beloved. Majnūn is depicted burning his hands with the fire's embers whereas her husband, in contrast, warms himself with the fire's heat. The marked contrast between how each character is shown making contact with the fire is suggestive of two radically different love relations: love as a highly romanticized but destructive phenomenon, symbolized in Majnūn's searing his hands with the fire, versus a conservative perception of love as essentially a functional phenomenon, symbolized in the husband's use of the fire as a source of comfort.

#### Poets Trading Tropes About Women

In the Majnūn Laylā romance, there exist a number of narratives that attribute Majnūn's madness to his hearing verses about Laylā recited by a rival male poet. These love triangles generally depict the following situation: A poet (perhaps also bearing the nickname Majnūn) recites to Majnūn verses in which he proclaims that both of them are in love with

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<sup>21</sup> See Manzalaoui's mention of how swooning may have certain sexual connotations. M. Manzalaoui, "Swooning Lovers," 75.

Laylā. Upon hearing these verses, Majnūn becomes confused and loses his mind. An example of this type of love triangle, as quoted in Chapter Two, is:

...Ibn al-‘Arabi said: Mu‘ādh ibn Kulayb was mad (*majnūn*) and was in love with Laylā. Sharing in this love for her was Muzāḥim ibn al-Harith al-‘Uqaylī. Muzāḥim one day said to the mad one:

*Both of us, O Mu‘ādh, love Laylā, in me and in you there  
is Laylā’s dust,  
I am your partner in the loving of one who has been your  
and my destiny, [there is] only torment from  
loving her,  
She has befuddled your mind and enveloped my heart  
which has become crazed and ill.*

It is said: Indeed when he heard these verses, he became mixed up and deranged.<sup>22</sup> (7)

Here, the triangulated erotic exchange is present in the act of a man’s declamation of poetry about a female beloved to a male rival poet. Ostensibly, what is being expressed in the anecdote is competing male desires for the same female beloved. But actually the verses are suggestive of a partnership in the love trial. Muzāḥim explicitly uses the term *sharaka*

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<sup>22</sup>There seems to be a difference between the references to Majnūn’s madness at the beginning and end of this passage. In the passage’s beginning, his madness is a poetic trope. However, toward the end of the passage, Majnūn becomes deranged upon hearing another man’s *tashbīb* of his beloved. This latter form of mental disturbance seems less poetic and more pathological.

*fī ḥubbiḥā* ('to share love of her') and he emphasizes their collective experience and destiny in this trial. There are many similarities between this configuration and another (to be discussed shortly) involving the act of a man verbally describing a woman to a male listener who then becomes infatuated with this image. Here again, sharing words about a beloved is made analagous to sexually sharing the beloved herself. René Girard's and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's findings on the erotic triangle indicate "the bond that links the two rivals is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved."<sup>23</sup> True, that this bond between the two men is not devoid of hostility. But it is for this reason that Sedgwick uses the word "desire" rather than "love" to designate the erotic component in homosocial relationships. Her use of the word 'desire' is "analogous to the psychoanalytic use of 'libido'--not for a particular affective state or emotion, but for the affective or social force, the glue, even when its manifestation is hostility or hatred or something less emotively charged, that shapes an important relationship."<sup>24</sup> Likewise, Peter Erickson has pointed out that both male rivalry and male friendship are encompassed by the concept of male bonding.

A striking example of poets trading tropes about each other's beloveds is found in an exchange between the 'Udhri poet Jamīl and his bard, Kuthayyir (also an 'Udhri poet), as recorded in the romance of Jamīl Buthaynah.<sup>25</sup> In this exchange, Jamīl recites to Kuthayyir the latter's own verse about 'Azzah, and Kuthayyir declaims to Jamīl the latter's own verse

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<sup>23</sup>Sedgwick, Between Men, 21.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>25</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah in the Aghānī, 8: 109.

about Buthaynah. A mirroring relation between poet and his bard is certainly depicted in Kuthayyir's act of uttering Jamīl's verse to Jamīl himself; by mimicking Jamīl to Jamīl, Kuthayyir mirrors back to Jamīl the latter's poetic eloquence and love relation with the beloved. But there exists an interesting triangulated erotic exchange just in the very act of Kuthayyir's declamation of Jamīl's verse about his beloved, Buthaynah, to Jamīl himself or in the act of Jamīl's declamation of Kuthayyir's verse about 'Azzah to Kuthayyir himself.

Kuthayyir, by stepping into Jamīl's poetic shoes and by donning Jamīl's poetic persona, however briefly, is shown modeling a love relation with Jamīl's beloved. Jamīl becomes the third party voyeur witnessing Kuthayyir performing an act of poetic intimacy with Buthaynah, his beloved. Likewise, Kuthayyir also enacts the role of the third party voyeur when he is the audience for Jamīl's performance of an act of poetic intimacy with 'Azzah, his (Kuthayyir's) beloved.

Taking Kuthayyir's declamation of Jamīl's verses to Jamīl himself as an example, and recalling the multiple links between speech and sex in these romances, the triangulated erotic exchange may be delineated thus: Kuthayyir bonds with Jamīl through presenting speech about the latter's beloved to him; Kuthayyir also vicariously models intimacy with Jamīl's beloved by declaiming Jamīl's love verses addressed to Buthaynah; the bond between Jamīl and his beloved--the third vector of the triangle--is already implicit in the text of the verses themselves. What is also striking about this exchange is that both poets preface their respective recitations with the phrase 'do you know why Buthaynah (or 'Azzah) was disgraced and

divulged by your saying...' Hence, Jamīl's verses that Kuthayyir declaims to Jamīl are presumably among the verses that impugned Buthaynah's chastity, verses that indiscreetly divulged his passion for Buthaynah, and thereby, dishonored her. Hence, when each poet-lover is shown mirroring to the other the other's spoken indiscretions, then each is shown mirroring to the other the other's sexual license with his beloved.

Yet another instance of how poetic speech binds all three members of the triangle to one another is found in a narrative involving Jamīl as a poet-dispatcher and Kuthayyir as a poet-messenger. The anecdote, cited below, is from the Aghānī rendition of the romance of Jamīl Buthaynah. Anxious because he cannot remember the place for an upcoming tryst he has with Buthaynah, Jamīl persuades his bard, Kuthayyir, to visit his beloved's tents in order to confirm this appointment. Before he dispatches Kuthayyir, he describes to the latter his last meeting with Buthaynah, and among the things that he relates is that it occurred while his beloved's maidservant was washing a dress. Kuthayyir then broaches to Jamīl an idea concerning how he may be able to use this bit of information to indirectly elicit a response from Buthaynah when he is there.

Kuthayyir said to him: How do you feel about my acting out some verses, when I go to her encampment, in which I mention this clue if I am not able to be alone with her? He [Jamīl] said: That is the right thing. So he sent him to her. He [Kuthayyir] said to him: Wait for me. Then Kuthayyir set out until he was lodged with them. Her father said to him: What do you have to offer? He said: Three verses occurred to me, so I would like to present them to you. He said: Bring them. Kuthayyir said: So I recited them to him while Buthaynah was listening:

*Then I said to her: O 'Azzah, my friend was sent to you as a*



*messenger--the one entrusted is the one dispatched--  
to establish between you and me a tryst  
and so that you may command me what I should do in this  
matter.*

*My last tryst with you was the day you met me in the  
bottommost valley of al-Dūm while the robe was being washed.*

He said: Then Buthaynah slapped the side of her tent curtain and said: Beat it! Beat it! Her father said to her: What is the matter, Buthaynah? She said: While folk are sleeping, a dog, from behind the hill, keeps harrassing us. Next, she said to her maidservant: Get us firewood from al-Daumat so that we may slaughter and stew a sheep for Kuthayyir. Then, Kuthayyir said: I am in too much of a hurry for that. He went to Jamīl and informed him, and Jamīl said: The tryst is in al-Daumat. She [Buthaynah] remarked to Umm al-Husayn and Laylā, daughters of her maternal aunt, with whom she was on intimate and trustworthy terms: Indeed, I perceived that Jamīl was behind what seemed like Kuthayyir's serenade. So Kuthayyir and Jamīl set out until they came to al-Daumat and Buthaynah arrived with her companion. They were together until dawn broke. Kuthayyir used to say: I never saw a gathering that was finer than that and there is no empathy like the one each had for the mind and heart of the other. I do not know which of the two was more understanding [of the other].<sup>26</sup>

Through the success of the rhetorical strategem, Kuthayyir's bond with Jamīl, his poet-mentor, is affirmed. The agent of this strategem is Kuthayyir himself who, in effect, acts as the go-between for a meeting between the lovers. Also, Kuthayyir creates a form of intimacy between himself and Jamīl's beloved, Buthaynah, merely by invoking his beloved, 'Azzah, as a mirror for Buthaynah. By poetically rendering 'Azzah as a

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 106-107.

stand-in for Buthaynah and by presenting himself as the stand-in for Jamīl, Kuthayyir succeeds in drawing Buthaynah's attention to the matter at hand. Certainly, the poetic charade enacted by Kuthayyir allows for the confirmation of Jamīl's tryst with Buthaynah. It is interesting that Kuthayyir is shown accompanying Jamīl when he embarks on the trip for the rendez-vous. In Kuthayyir's sentimental tribute to the mutuality of understanding between the two lovers, there is something of a wishfulness to partake in this relation between the two, and to model his relation with 'Azzah after theirs.

The Majnūn Laylā narrative in which the poet falls in love with Laylā through a third party report of her is another effective example of a triangulated erotic exchange involving speech about a woman. Majnūn initially falls in love with a description of Laylā narrated by a third party. Assuming that the performer of the speech act that describes her is a man, this narrative could be interpreted as additional evidence for how it is always with a woman 'possessed' by (even if just verbally possessed) or attached to another man that the poet-lover falls in love. Given the connections between speech and sex in the romance, the act of a man verbally describing and unveiling the traits of a woman is suggestive of an erotic association with or possession of this woman.<sup>27</sup> Just as, earlier in the

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<sup>27</sup>One is reminded of the links between poetic *wasf* and sexual intrigue in the incidents concerning the pre-Islamic poet al-Nābighah's poem "al-Mutajarridah" "The Lady Divested." The poem was composed at the request of the poet's patron and friend, al-Nu'mān, king of al-Ḥīrah, and the king specifically requested that the queen be described nude from head to foot. It is further related that "the poet al-Munakhkhal...a secret lover of al-Mutajarridah, became jealous of hearing al-Nābighah's description, and insinuated into al-Nu'mān's mind that al-Nābighah must have had a love affair with her--whereupon the poet prudently left the court of al-Ḥīrah..."

chapter, the phenomenon of each of the two men (al-Mundhir and al-Ḥasan) desiring Ḥafsah whenever she is attached to the other suggests that a homoerotic component is present in the men's relations, the phenomenon of Majnūn desiring Laylā when he hears a description of her narrated by a male third party implies a degree of homoeroticism in the link between the two men. Majnūn as the audience of this verbal performance 'falls in love' with the female image generated by the male performer. Hence, the triangulated erotic dimensions of the speech-act are evident. If Majnūn falls in love with Laylā through dissemination of speech about her, likewise the circulation of his own poetry about her also advertises her. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, the man who marries Laylā, in Aḥmad Shawqī's modern adaptation of this romance to drama, falls in love with her upon hearing Majnūn's poetry about her.

Not just the 'Udhri corpus of love stories and poetry but even 'Umarī narrative and verse is characterized by the love triangle motif. In the following anecdote concerning 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a that is related by Ibn Qutayba, the configuration of the erotic triangle consists of 'Umar, the poet-lover, his pious brother and one of 'Umar's female paramours.

His brother al-Ḥārith was very religious and chaste. He used to remonstrate with him and chide him from day to day. 'Umar related: I had, on that day, a rendez-vous with al-Thurayyā. He said: I went to the mosque at sunset and al-Thurayyā came (for the appointment). She found al-Ḥārith reclining upon his bed and so she threw herself on top of him, not doubting that it was him ['Umar]. He then leapt up and said: Who are you? [She] said to him. Al-Thurayyā. Then he observed: I do not see 'Umar benefitting from our rigours. ['Umar] said: I came for

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CHAL, Umayyad Period, 60.

the appointment and did not know what had transpired and he [al-Hārith] approached me and said: Woe to thee! We almost, by God, were seduced after you [left]. By God, if I felt anything, [it was only because] al-Thurayyā, your paramour, fell on top of me. 'Umar said: Never will fire singe you after [having been with] her! [Al-Hārith] said: Upon you and her the curse of God!<sup>28</sup>

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### Animal Sacrifice and the Triangle

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I have identified triangulations mainly in the 'Udhri romance's depiction of interactions between its stock characters: the lover and the beloved, of course, and around and between them the poet-visitor, the fellow poet, the poet-messenger, the husband, the beloved's father, and so forth.<sup>29</sup> Yet, in these Bedouin romances (with their genealogical links to the *qasīdah*), a domestic animal also sometimes functions as a type of stock character, or more accurately, as a substitute for one of the existing stock characters (as we saw in the anecdote depicting Qays' sale of a she-camel to Lubnā's husband). In the next and concluding section of this chapter, I consider the triangulations involving the lover, an animal (as a substitute for the beloved), and the husband.

In analyzing this particular type of triangle, I move from the chapter's initial focus on how female unchastity is sensualized and linked with the erotic triangle to an examination of the connections between marriage,

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<sup>28</sup>'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, in *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 1: 240-241.

<sup>29</sup>A. J. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry: A Primer for Students* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965) 11-13. See his comments on the stock characterizations in these love stories.

animal sacrifice and the triangle. Once marriage has occurred in the Majnūn Laylā romance, motifs of animal sacrifice suddenly are made prominent in the story. Once marriage has occurred and the rivalry between the husband and poet-lover increases, to end this intensifying antagonism, a third party or "a victim who is different from the rivals, a scapegoat must be chosen."<sup>30</sup>

Two phases mark the choosing of the scapegoat:

All sacrificial rites are based on two substitutions. The first is provided by generative violence, which substitutes a single victim for all members of the community. The second, the only strictly ritualistic substitution, is that of a victim for the surrogate victim. As we know, it is essential that the victim be drawn from outside the community. The surrogate victim, by contrast, is a member of the community...The need for some distinction between the *original [surrogate] victim* and the *ritual victims* can readily be explained. If the sacrificial victim belonged to the community (as does the surrogate victim), then his death would promote further violence instead of dispelling it.<sup>31</sup> [Italics mine]

In the Majnūn Laylā romance, the ritual victims are two types of domestic animals: the ewe<sup>32</sup> and the she-camel. I argue that in the 'Udhri corpus (and possibly in pre-Islamic poetry as well), a virgin is the pre-eminent surrogate victim and a domestic animal that substitutes for her is often the ritual victim.<sup>33</sup> Another animal, the gazelle, acts as a simile for the

<sup>30</sup>Moi, "Oedipal Rivalries," 22.

<sup>31</sup>Girard, Violence, 269.

<sup>32</sup>The symbolic use of the ewe as a ritual victim in the romance stems from actual social practice, for among pre-Islamic Arabs, a ram or ewe was a primary animal of sacrifice. The root '-r-r meaning 'to sacrifice,' yields the word '*arīra*, which is defined as 'an ewe offered in sacrifice to idols.' Also see r-y-m for etymological links between love and sacrifice.

<sup>33</sup>Note how in the pre-Islamic *qasīdah* wild animals act as a simile for virginal women; these wild animals are a contrast to the domesticity of the

virgin or beloved in these stories and therefore is not to be regarded as a ritual victim. Only domestic animals are sacrificed in these romances, whereas wild animals, such as the gazelle, are consecrated for freedom by the poetic canon. This is consistent with W. Robertson Smith's observation that "an animal..[that] the Arabs would have allowed to go free instead of killing it" would be "primarily, a thing that is taboo...one that has supernatural qualities or associations, of a kind that forbid it to be used for common purposes..."<sup>34</sup>

Below, I quote an important anecdote from the romance of Majnūn Laylā-- an anecdote that demonstrates a classic triangular model of sacrifice as described by Girard and other scholars. In this model, when there is a conflict between two male entities, a third party--often a woman, child or animal--serves as the sacrificial victim.

Majnūn passed by two men that had hunted a gazelle. They had bound her with a rope [*fa-rabatāhā bi-ḥabl*] and were taking her away. When Majnūn saw her thrashing her feet in the rope, his eyes teared and he said to them: Release her and take in her place a ewe from my sheep. (And Maymūn in his narrative related: Take in place of her a young she-camel from my camels.) So he gave the [ewe] to the two [men] and they freed [the gazelle]. She made her escape running away. Majnūn said to the two men when he saw her [ewe] in their tangle of rope:

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poet's own riding animal (e.g., she-camel or mare). What is often stressed in this analogizing to wild animals is that the women are high-born and free women who do not engage in domestic work or menial tasks. See, for example, the famous description of "an 'egg' of the curtained quarters' in "The Mu'allaqah of Imru' al-Qays" or the lesser known verses of al-Muraqqish al-Akbar in Abū al-'Abbās al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbī's al-Mufaddaliyyāt, ed. Charles J. Lyall (Beirut: Maṭba'at al-Ābā' al-Yasū'iyyun, 1920) 3: 460.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, Religion of the Semites, 463.

*O my two companions, that today have ensnared in a rope a likeness of Laylā, and then shackled her.  
 Indeed, this day I see in the profile of your ewe,  
 a similitude that resembles Laylā, so release her...*  
 And he said concerning her [gazelle], gazing at her while she was running with great speed, fleeing fearfully:  
*O likeness of Laylā, do not fear me for I today am a friend of the female wild beast.  
 O likeness of Laylā, were you to tarry awhile, perhaps my heart would recover from its ravages.  
 She flees, having been liberated from her bond by me.  
 You--if only you knew--have been freed for Laylā. (81-82)*

This anecdote demonstrates how the lover, while aware that Laylā has been married to another man, symbolically enacts the liberation of his beloved gazelle. The gazelle, having been pursued and trapped by the party of male hunters for the purpose of slaughter and consumption, is substituted, upon the behest of the poet by a domestic animal, a ewe.<sup>35</sup> For Majnūn, only the wild gazelle or Laylā as the elusive object of desire can be enshrined in his poetic canon. A ewe would not make for an appealing object of male desire. The gazelle, in the narrative, is entrapped by the hunters' rope, *fa-rabatāhā bi-ḥabl*, just as Laylā is bound to Thaḳīf by ropes (*hibāl*) in a couplet declaimed by the poet.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, in the poet's verses quoted above, he

<sup>35</sup> In the Mu'allaqah of al-Hārith, we find the following verse: *[You act] against us, falsely and oppressively, as the deer are sacrificed in place [of sheep] from the fold of the flock.* Commentators note that the Arabs in old times were accustomed to hunt and kill a wild goat [antelope or deer] instead of sacrificing a sheep. *Dīwān of al-Hārith b. Hillizah*, ed. Hashim al-Ṭa'ān (Baghdād: Matba'at al-ʿIrshād, 1969.)

<sup>36</sup> Below I reproduce the entire unit along with the verses:

A group [of suitors] from her tribe [*qawm*] proposed to Laylā, the beloved of Majnūn, but she disliked them. Then a man of wealth

himself quite self-consciously analogizes between the gazelle's entrapment and Laylā's marriage, and metaphorically enacts Laylā's liberation from what he perceives to be marital bondage: *You*, he proclaims to the gazelle, *if only you knew--have been freed for Laylā*. The use of the word *withāq*, meaning not only 'rope' but also 'bond' in the verse *She flees, having been liberated from her bond by me*, underscores the merging of a bodily bondage with a conjugal one. Suzanne Stetkevych has written about "the identity of the invigoration of hunt and battle with that of marriage--that is, licit and procreative sexuality" in pre-Islamic poetry.<sup>37</sup> The pre-Islamic poet 'Antarah captures this metaphor in his "Mu'allaqah" when he proclaims *O lovely is the hunted wild ewe [ya shata ma qanasin], to whom is she lawful? To me she is unlawful; would to God that she was not unlawful*.<sup>38</sup> The term *halīla* or 'unlawful' refers to a woman he cannot marry because his tribe is at war with her tribe. In the Majnūn Laylā narrative related above, the symbolism of the party of male hunters having hunted and entrapped the gazelle acts as a metaphor for the courtship of Laylā by Thaḳīf and his marriage to her. The hunt also metonymically recreates the lover's quest for

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from Thaḳīf proposed to her and she was pleased by him and he was handsome, so he married her and departed with her. And concerning this Majnūn said:

*Look there at Laylā who has become like a ewe that is let,  
whose halters [ḥibāl] have been cut off from all except Thaḳīf,  
They penned her in a 'fat farm' (ḥabasūhā maḥbas al-budnī)  
and sought to gain money through her, May their wealth  
decrease!*

*O my companions, do you know of an artifice, the artfulness of  
which would draw us near to Laylā's discourse?  
If you do not know it, you are not the first seeker to fail to  
attain the thing sought.(56)*

<sup>37</sup>S. Stetkevych, Mute, 276.

<sup>38</sup>'Antarah, Diwān (Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir, 1966) 28.



the beloved; in the romance of Qays Lubnā too, "Qays accompanies some friends on a hunt expedition in the hope of seeing Lubnā."<sup>39</sup>

Here, I would like to elaborate upon this anecdote's use of the gazelle and ewe as contrasting symbols that represent Laylā, the female beloved. What we have here is, as stated in an article by Brian Smith and Wendy Doniger on sacrifice in ancient Indian texts, "a kind of synecdochic reductionism (whereby a part of the whole represents the whole)..."<sup>40</sup> Laylā's beauty and erotic allure as an elusive object of desire are condensed and then captured within an entity that is considered to embody these traits—i.e., the gazelle. By contrast, Laylā reduced to an item of domestic use-value, Laylā stripped of her individuality but not her biological sexuality, is represented in the form of another animal entity—the ewe. The analogies between courtship and the hunt as well as between marriage and animal bondage and slaughter are quite clearly present in the anecdote. Neither the gazelle nor the ewe, as animal counterparts, are "equivalent replacements" for Laylā, but rather they function as "condensed representatives" of their superior relative within a class.<sup>41</sup> Hence, we see in this anecdote how two male parties, hunters and a poet, split a third party, the female, into two parts (i.e., gazelle and ewe). Each male party then uses these two parts to represent the whole of the female. This split femininity is also mirrored in the stark contrast between the genteel, sublimated and ungenerative sexuality of the lover-poet and the physically functional sexuality of the

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<sup>39</sup> Qays Lubna, 9: 189. Also cited in Kilpatrick, "Aḥbār Manzūma," 352.

<sup>40</sup> Brian K. Smith and Wendy Doniger, "Sacrifice and Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification," Numen: International Review for the History of Religion, vol. XXXVI (1989): 206

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

male hunters. For the hunters, the ewe is more useful than the gazelle, for it can easily be bartered, bred or butchered.

In another narrative from the romance of Majnūn Laylā, the triangulated configuration involves the poet, a wolf and a gazelle. This second unit is as follows:

It was said to Majnūn: What have you seen that has been most endearing to you? He said: Laylā. It was said: Laylā permitting for we already know what she is to you, rather excepting her. He said: By God, nothing...except that I saw a gazelle once, and when I contemplated it, I recalled Laylā and [its] beauty began to increase in my eyes. Then a wolf accosted it and it fled. I followed it until it disappeared from my sight. I later discovered that the wolf had felled it [*sara'a*] and eaten some of it. So I aimed at [the wolf] with an arrow and did not err in slaying it. I slit open its stomach and extracted what he had eaten of [the gazelle], and adding it to the remains of its corpse and I buried it. I then burned the wolf. Concerning this, I recited:

*God refused to dispense kindness to the creature,  
 Patience regarding what He has willed for it.  
 I saw a gazelle grazing amid the meadow,  
 and said: Yonder I see Laylā glimmering in the noonday.  
 O gazelle, eat wholesomely and amply and have no dread,  
 indeed you are a neighbor [jāra] to me, do not fear fate.  
 I have for your sake strong weapons—a steely sharp sword,  
 [and] I make it yield the best of cuts.  
 It did not fear me except a wolf leapt up,  
 and clamped its fangs and claws in the deer's belly.  
 I chose an arrow from my quiver and let it  
 fall upon the heart of the wolf and its throat.  
 Killing him slackened my rage and cured my heartsickness,  
 Indeed, ardour attained vengeance. <sup>42</sup> (74)*

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<sup>42</sup>This translation is a modification of an existing translation.

In this narrative, Laylā is hunted or pursued by a wolf and furthermore, she is caught and eaten by him. Here, what may the wolf's hunt and killing of the gazelle represent? In Shawqī's adaptation of the romance, Qays, at one point, declares: *And many a wolf that rolled its friendly tooth and claw in my hand, is tenderer, Laylā, than thy jealous kinfolk.*<sup>43</sup> An analogy is made between a wolf and Laylā's 'jealous kin,' specifically the father. Likewise, in the Qur'anic story of Joseph, Joseph's father compares his other sons (i.e., Joseph's brothers) to a ravenous wolf. The wolf in the above narrative, therefore, most likely represents Laylā's male kin (father) or her husband. The poet's losing sight of the gazelle (Laylā) precisely during the period the wolf catches, kills and consumes her becomes comprehensible when we recall that Laylā's kin initially concealed from Majnūn the fact of her marriage to Ward and its consummation. The retaliatory aspect of the narrative, whereby Majnūn slays the wolf (i.e., the husband or father), as well as the poet's words, *Killing him slackened my rage and cured my heartsickness*, also becomes comprehensible. By fantasizing about avenging himself upon Thaqīf for the marriage and loss of his beloved, Majnūn performs a cathartic exercise.

In both narratives, a gazelle is hunted and caught by actors other than Majnūn, but in one she is released and in the other, she is killed and eaten. We notice that whereas in the second narrative unit there is an outbreak of violence and killing (i.e., the wolf kills the gazelle and is then killed by Majnūn), in the former the violence is deflected from the gazelle. Why is

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<sup>43</sup>According to S. Stetkevych, in pre-Islamic poetry, the wolf often linked with hunger and liminality, is an outcast figure that inhabits a desert wasteland. In this narrative, the figure of the hungry wolf acquires a different meaning. S. Stetkevych, *Mute*, 272.

this so? Rene Girard would argue that the reason is that whereas in the former narrative, a substitution occurs, in the latter it does not.

In the first narrative, to prevent a potential altercation between the two male parties, between Majnūn and the hunters, the ewe is sacrificed as a ritual victim in place of the third party (i.e., the gazelle). In the second narrative, the wolf, symbolizing the male hunter, kills the gazelle itself. In other words, in the second narrative, no sacrifice occurs because no substitution occurs. According to Girard, when no sacrifice occurs, when no form of ritualized violence is enacted, retributive violence unleashes itself. The second narrative depicts an outbreak of retaliatory violence in the triangle -- the wolf kills and devours the gazelle, and then, to avenge this killing, another hunter, Majnūn kills and burns the wolf. The poet himself, after killing the wolf, proclaims: *Killing him slackened my rage and cured my heartsickness, Indeed, ardour attained vengeance.*

At the beginning of this chapter, I noted that the third party to whom the 'Udhri lover loses his beloved marries the woman in question. This seems to suggest a link between the pattern of triangulation and marriage in the 'Udhri romance which I further examine in the next chapter. What is important to note is that, in the Majnūn Laylā romance, once the pattern of triangulation that leads to marriage runs its course, the text recreates another triangle on a symbolic level: the sacrificial triangle in which a domestic animal, substituting as ritual victim for a virgin bride-to-be, is sacrificed.

## Chapter 7: Courtship and Marriage

If one thinks of marriage in relation to the 'Udhri romances, it is the specter of marriage thwarted that come to mind. What seems to be made prominent by these love stories is how failed courtship destroys the possibility of marriage between the romance's lover and beloved. But the occurrence of a marriage between the 'Udhri beloved and a man other than the lover is an important element in these stories. This marriage usually takes place not at the end but in the first half or middle of the story. Once this marriage occurs, the two relations--that between the lover and his beloved as well as the marital relation between the beloved and her husband--are depicted in a state of uneasy co-existence. Thus, unlike what we find in the medieval European tradition of romance--in which courtship exists outside marriage but is not a prelude to marriage--in the 'Udhri romance tradition, courtship exists both as a prelude to marriage and as an external to the conjugal relation. In the second-half of this chapter, I will take up the matter of how courtship or the love relation exists as an external to marriage in the Majnūn Laylā romance, but first I want to focus on its existence as a prelude.

In this romance, it is important to note that courtship exists as a prelude to the beloved's marriage to a man other than the one shown courting her. The courtship between Majnūn and Laylā, in other words, acts as a prelude to Laylā's marriage to Ward instead of Majnūn. Contrary to what the romance seems to suggest, i.e., that Majnūn's courtship of Laylā, because it impugned her chastity, obstructed or hindered her chances of

marriage, I argue that the poet's publicizing of his love relation facilitated the occurrence of Laylā's marriage.<sup>1</sup> Since the words broadcast by the poet-lover were about a woman, the love relation actually mediated in the matrimonial process. Only on the surface does the 'Udhri romance pit the marital relation of the beloved against her erotic relation with her lover, just as it appears to juxtapose the paternal relation between father and daughter against that between the lovers. I am going to demonstrate that the poet-lover's role in the Majnūn Laylā romance is structurally indispensable to precisely the two figures of the father and the husband. Majnūn, by mediating in the transfer of the virgin daughter/bride from father to the husband, enables the cementing of ties between them. It is unclear from the sources, however, to what extent the 'Udhri poet-lovers consciously viewed themselves as mediators in the Bedouin marriage economy.<sup>2</sup>

### Courtship as Prelude to Marriage

To begin elucidating the interconnections in Majnūn Laylā between the circulation of desirable words about a woman and the circulation of a

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<sup>1</sup> The character of al-Zayn in Tayyib Ṣāliḥ's modern novel, 'Urs al-Zayn, has a similar function; cf. al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ, 'Urs al-Zayn (Bayrūt: Dār al-'Awdah, 1986). Denys Johnson-Davies, "The Wedding of Zein" and Other Stories by Tayeb Salih, (Heinemann, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> See Paul Goldin's article on the classical Chinese Zhanguo ce in which among the 'intrigues' dealt with is the following: "Without a go-between, a girl cannot be married. If her father does not show her to anyone, she will become an old spinster for lack of suitors—but if he does display her, she will be cheapened and remain unbought. The go-between is the only solution." Paul Goldin, Miching mallecho: The Zhanguo ce and classical rhetoric, Sino-Platonic Papers, no. 41 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1993) 17.

desirable woman herself, we pose the following question: In the romance's world, how is a virgin with a sullied reputation able to marry so quickly and easily after being scandalized, indeed, how is she able to marry at all? One would think that given Laylā's father's allegations of how Majnūn has publicized and broadcast his attachment with his daughter, she would be bereft of other suitors, that other men would not risk marriage to her. Yet, a very different portrait emerges from the text of the love story. According to one account, after the emergence of the scandal involving the lovers,

A group [of suitors] from her tribe [*qawm*] proposed to Laylā, the beloved of Majnūn, but she disliked them. Then a man of wealth from Thaqīf proposed to her and she was pleased by him and he was handsome, so he married her and departed with her. (56)

A variant in which marital decision-making is assigned to Laylā's parents rather than to her states:

When Laylā was veiled from Majnūn, a group [of suitors] proposed to her. But her family did not consent to them. Then a wealthy man from Thaqīf proposed to her, and they married him [to her] and they hid that from Majnūn.<sup>3</sup> (47)

Importantly, it is to Laylā, as "the beloved of Majnūn" that the suitors

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<sup>3</sup> "Subsequently, a bit of this news was related to [Majnūn]--news that he was unable to verify. So he recited: (47)

*I prayed a prayer, not unaware...*

*And my Lord is a seer of what is hidden in the breasts  
[of human beings]*

*If you had only presented the coolness of her upper teeth  
to [one] poorer than me, indeed I am an impoverished  
one.*

*The news that she has married has spread.*

*Will a bearer of good tidings bring to me [news] of her  
divorce?*

present their proposals. Evidently, "Laylā, the beloved of Majnūn" acquires star billing, and a number of suitors from her own tribe ask for her hand in marriage. Being a 'celebrity beloved,' she does not at all lack suitors interested in matrimony--in fact, she or her family can afford to rebuff them, and the reason for the refusal becomes apparent from what follows: "Then a man of wealth from Thaqīf proposed to her and she was pleased by him and he was handsome, so he married her and departed with her," or according to the variant, "Then a wealthy man from Thaqīf proposed to her, and they [her kin] married him [to her]." Access to wealth played a role in the marital decision-making. The fact that marriage with a man from another tribe is consented to, a man whose foremost trait the narrative describes as his affluence, seems to imply that men from her own tribal stock were refused on the basis of the same criterion--the criterion of wealth. Actually, Laylā gains access to wealth or wins a proposal from a rich husband precisely because of her poetic 'star appeal,' because she is the much-courted beloved of the famed love-poet, Majnūn. Since the proposals from men within the tribe are quickly followed by a proposal from a man from another tribe, it seems that Laylā's fame rapidly spread beyond the confines of her tribe. Or perhaps, men from other tribes who had frequent contact with the 'Āmir tribe heard Majnūn's poetry about her recited and learned of her renown. Presumably, proposals from a large number of suitors led to a considerable increase in the *mahr* or bride-price offered for her. Priced out of the marriage market within her own tribe, she elicits a proposal from a man belonging to a prosperous, neighboring tribe, the Thaqīf.



This phenomenon of multiple suitors desiring Laylā because Majnūn desires her effectively illustrates Rene Girard's claim that "desire itself is essentially mimetic, directed toward an object desired by [a rival] model." Girard, in his examination of "all the varieties of desire," posits that there exists "not only a subject and an object but a third person as well: the rival."

He then goes on to elaborate:

Rivalry does not arise because of the fortuitous convergence of two desires on a single object; rather, *the subject desires the object because the rival desires it*. In desiring an object the rival alerts the subject to the desirability of the object. The rival, then, serves as a model for the subject, not only in regard to such secondary matters as style and opinions but also, and more essentially, in regard to desires.<sup>4</sup>

In Girard's scheme, "...the subject constitutes the third corner of the triangle and not the first..."<sup>5</sup> As noted in Chapter Six, this subject position, in the Majnūn Laylā romance, is occupied by Ward whereas the poet-lover functions as the rival. Yet, according to one of the story's variants, Majnūn himself falls in love with Laylā through the *wasf* or description of her by presumably another male. Hence, the romance suggests that the mimesis of male desire in the Bedouin system of sexuality and conjugality was such that each man acted as the rival/model for, as well as the subject of, another. According to Girard, the relationship between the mimetic rivals is such that each becomes the model and the disciple of the other, as the

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<sup>4</sup>Girard, Violence, 145.

<sup>5</sup>René Girard, Des choses cachées depuis la foundation du monde, recherches avec J-M Oughourlian et G. Lefort, (Paris: B. Grasset, 1978) 380, quoted in Toril Moi, "The Missing Mother: The Oedipal Rivalries of René Girard," Diacritics 12 (Summer, 1982): 27.

differences between them diminish.

Ahmad Shawqī, the well-known Egyptian poet and playwright who adapted the Aghānī's rendition of the romance to a dramatic form, insightfully understood this phenomenon of the mimesis of desire, for in his play the allure of Majnūn's words about Laylā drew Ward ibn Thaqīf into marriage with her. In a frank and provocative exchange between the beloved's husband and lover that takes place in one of the play's last scenes, the former declares:

Qays [Majnūn's tribal name], but for thee I never would have chosen  
Aught but Thaqīf, nor given a thought to 'Āmir [Laylā's tribe]  
But I have loved thy poetry since boyhood,  
Recited the long stanzas, sung the short,  
Glimpsing between the phrases Laylā's shadow,  
And catching at her image through the rhymes.  
When she rejected thee, and it was said,  
Passion and song have come between the lovers,  
I came to seek her hand, spared no expense...<sup>6</sup>

Ward ibn Thaqīf explicitly states that Qays or Majnūn himself is the reason for his choosing Laylā -- "but for thee I never would have chosen aught but Thaqīf" and then elaborates by launching into an exaltation of Majnūn's words or poetry, to which he declares he has been listening since boyhood.

Ward's marriage to Laylā occurs because of her star appeal, an appeal that is generated through Majnūn's publicized courtship of Laylā and epitomized in his poetry about her. In other words, it is as a result of the poetic testimony of a male 'love expert,' a love-poet, that Ward confers value upon Laylā and then chooses to marry her. A number of phrases from

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<sup>6</sup>Shawqī, Majnūn Laylā, trans. Arberry, 47.

the romance describe Majnūn as an expert in courting women, a connoisseur of women's ways and converse, and as being excessively fond of their company. Girard states:

If the subject desires this woman rather than another, it is because of the flattering attention she receives. And this attention would be all the more flattering, it would give the sexual object all the more value in the eyes of the subject, if it is directed to her by a great expert in the matter, a person who appears as invincible in the erotic field, for instance what one would call a "ladies man."<sup>7</sup>

But Majnūn was not simply a 'ladies' man' in the sense referred to by Girard above. He was both somewhat womanly and somewhat of a womanizer. In a sense, 'Udhri poets like Majnūn were ideally suited to function as mediators in the economy of the Bedouin marriage system--a point which will be further elaborated upon later in this chapter. As a rival model-lover, he was able to telegraph effectively to a subject male the full scope of his erotic experience because his character espoused the traits of two radically different male character-types: an 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a and an effeminate (*mukhannath*). According to Everett Rowson, in early Islamic times, the institutional role of matchmaking was taken up by eunuchs and recognized effeminates (*mukhannathūn*). Rowson, in his article "The Effeminates of Early Medina," observes that "...there is evidence, from the time of the Prophet as well as the following half century, that, because of their admission to women's quarters (which continued despite the Prophet's reported disapproval), the *mukhannathūn* played a significant role as

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<sup>7</sup>René Girard, *Des choses cachées*, 380, quoted in Toril Moi, "The Missing Mother: The Oedipal Rivalries of René Girard," *Diacritics* 12 (Summer, 1982): 23.

matchmakers for eligible bachelors with secluded women.”<sup>8</sup> I am in no way suggesting that ‘Udhri poet-lovers were effeminate or that they functioned as self-proclaimed matchmakers in the sense that the *mukhannathūn* did.<sup>9</sup> But I am arguing that they shared certain traits with the *mukhannathūn* that, combined with others, structurally situated them as such intermediaries. The character of the ‘Udhri lover drew from the qualities of both a male whose expertise was the sexually instrumental use of women and a male whose expertise was his familiarity with women’s speech, customs and behaviour, a male who had intimate knowledge of women the way they might know themselves because of his access to their social circles.

However, Girard’s assertion that “it is not through words...but by the example of his own desire that the model conveys to the subject the supreme desirability of the object,” does not hold true entirely for the Arab medieval context.<sup>10</sup> In this context, poetic expression was integral to courtship, and therefore, the desirability of a female beloved was conveyed and broadcast through words primarily. As Islamic society became increasingly sexually segregated, it was not uncommon that the poetic example set by a ‘love expert or model’ became the mediating element in

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<sup>8</sup>E. K. Rowson, “The Effeminate of Early Medina,” *Journal of the American Oriental Studies*, 111 (1991): 676.

<sup>9</sup>It is noteworthy, however, that in the *Aghānī* romance of *Majnūn Laylā*, one of Jamīl’s verses is identified as half-Bedouin (‘*arabīyun*) and half-effeminate (*mukhannathūn*). This seems to suggest that perhaps there was a recognized mode of ‘effeminate speech,’ and that Udhri verse incorporated this type of speech. *Jamīl Buthaynah in Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 8: 118.

<sup>10</sup>I find this statement untenable on many grounds, but Girard prefaces it by: “If the model, who is apparently already endowed with superior being, desires some other object, that object must surely be capable of conferring an even greater plenitude of being.” Girard, *Violence*, 146.

effecting matrimony between a male suitor and the beloved. Since the role of poetic language was crucial to the model-rival's own engendering of desire (and its advertising) in the medieval Arabic romance, poetry also played an important role in the suitor's or subject's vicarious experience of this desire, and his ability to model his desire after that of the rival. In our romance, it is precisely through words that Majnūn both engenders his desire for Laylā and conveys it to the husband (the poet is never shown having direct contact with the husband until after the latter's marriage). The aforecited quotation from Shawqī's text also demonstrates that it is through the poet's words about Laylā that Ward is hooked: "And catching at her image through the rhymes..."

Just as Ward ibn Thaqīf, Laylā's husband, models his desire for her after that of his rival, Majnūn, likewise, in the medieval romance of Qays Lubnā, Lubnā's husband is shown rehearsing the desire of his rival, Qays. Ironically, just after having complained to his wife that the poet-lover's verses about her were compromising her and therefore his reputation, he invites singing girls to perform Qays' poetry in the presence of his wife. Thus, by re-enacting his rival's passion for his wife in his own home, he is shown fueling and rehearsing his own desire for her. Additionally, the role of song (poetry set to music) that is made prominent in the spread of Laylā's fame is also evident in the celebrity status of Lubnā as an 'Udhri beloved. In the Aghānī version of the romance of Qays Lubnā, we are presented with the following narrative:

Qays's affair acquired fame in Medina and al-Gharīd, Ma'bad, Mālik and their cohorts sang his poems. There remained no noble or commoner who did not hear this [music]. [Then Lubnā's] husband

went to her and reprehended her concerning this and said: You have scandalized me with your notoriety. She became angry and declared: Listen! By God, I did not marry you out of love nor for what you have, and nor have you have been deceived by my situation...He refrained from replying to her and [instead], to placate her, he began to bring to her singing-girls from the city that sang Qays's poetry before her. Yet, this only increased her misery and she did not cease weeping warm tears when she heard something of that [song]...<sup>11</sup>

Although he reproves his wife for 'permitting' her name to be bandied about, it is exactly this bandying of her name, this collective love affair with Qays's beloved that the city is musically enjoying, that the husband himself mimics and partakes in by marrying her. The names mentioned--al-Gharīd (a famed effeminate of Medina), Ma'bad, Malik--were all prominent singers and musicians during the early Umayyad period.

### Rhapsody, Revelation and the 'Coming Out' of a Young Woman

It is interesting that to mollify his wife, Lubnā's husband invites the singing-girls to come and sing Qays' poetry about her. It seems that he did this to cause greater anguish to her rather than to console her, but perhaps Lubnā's "weeping warm tears when she heard" Qays' songs about her also is suggestive of her pleasure--albeit bittersweet--in hearing these words describing her. Hence, in the 'Udhri romances, though the female beloved/wife is often depicted as being deeply pained and angered by the poet-lover's revelation of his desire for her, she also enjoys and benefits

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<sup>11</sup>Qays Lubnā, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 9: 208-209.

from the publicity her name acquires as a consequence of the spread of love poetry about her.

In fact, these romances portray Bedouin women as celebrating the acquisition of such a rhapsodizer and capitalizing on this acquisition, as the following quotation from Ibn Ḥazm's famous eleventh-century love treatise, The Ring of the Dove, demonstrates:

I have read in some Bedouin tale [*akhbār al-‘arab*] that their women-folk do not feel satisfied and convinced that a man is really in love with them, until his romantic feelings become public knowledge and are completely divulged; he must advertise and broadcast his attachment, and sing their praises for all to hear. I know not what to make of that, considering they have such a reputation for chastity: what chastity does a woman in fact possess, if her greatest desire and joy is to be notorious after this fashion?<sup>12</sup>

Ibn Dāwūd faulted male poets like Majnūn for their tendency toward indiscretion and revelation, and Ibn Ḥazm, living more than a century later, expresses puzzlement, in the quotation cited above, over why Bedouin tales and stories show the women as being very fond of this publicity. But could this emphasis on revelation in the literature be viewed as a type of social ‘coming out’ of a young woman, somewhat comparable, for example, to a maiden’s achievement of debutante status in elite society circles?

Although Ibn Ḥazm, in the passage cited above, speaks of what Bedouin women desire and define as true love, to what extent the views expressed are those of actual Bedouins, more specifically, of actual Bedouin women, is debatable. It is likely that his use of the term “Bedouin tale”

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<sup>12</sup>Ibn Ḥazm, Ring of the Dove, 86; see Arabic text in Tauq al-Hamāmah, 67

refers to stories and romances such as Majnūn Laylā, for as a member of eleventh-century Andalusian courtly society he clearly would have had access to diverse literary and scholarly works produced during the earlier Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd periods. Composed by men, these *akhbār* or tales obviously convey more information about what men desire or what they think women desire than about what women themselves desire. Whereas Ibn Ḥazm suggests that these tales construct male courtship as being subject to female conceptions of true love, actually, they reveal how female courtship expectations are shaped by male conceptions of desire. It is the desire or love of the Bedouin man that cannot exist unless he either poetically advertises his beloved or hears another man's verses about her. Female desire, in this framework, consists of being found desirable enough to be revealed by a male serenader. As we shall see, these male serenaders render the achievement of such a notoriety a kind of coup in the Bedouin courtship ritual--a coup in the eyes especially of a woman's female kin and friends.

If we briefly identify the symbolic transactions delineated by Ibn Ḥazm in this passage, we notice that a woman (virginal or married) is portrayed as allowing her name to be appropriated by a male poet in return for a kind of stardom or renown which in turn confers upon her an aesthetic and erotic value prized in courtship rituals, prized in the organization of sexuality and conjugality in Bedouin society as depicted by these stories. The male suitor or the poet-lover, in return, receives an opportunity to demonstrate his verbal prowess and skill and thus, a chance to attain fame and immortality. And it is his verbal prowess as exhibited in, for example, his tropical description and ornamentation of the beloved (*wasf*) that renders



her ever more publicly desirable.

According to Ibn Ḥazm's quotation, these Bedouin *akhbār* construct a man's ability to publicly 'sing a woman's praises' as a type of masculine test or contest. In the love story of 'Abla and 'Antar too, 'Abla's mother challenges 'Antar to poetically proclaim and broadcast his love for her daughter. If a man's ability to compose and publicly declaim poetry about a woman, in these stories, is regarded as a mark of his manhood and proof of his love for her, then perhaps a woman's ability to gain such a serenader is rendered a mark of her womanhood and proof of her desirability. In the male scriptor's portrayal of sexuality and courtship rituals in these romances, was the male initiated into becoming a serenader, while the female rite consisted of being serenaded?<sup>13</sup> The role of kin is not described as being very important. That a male suitor's publicizing of his beloved played an important part in her bid for marriage is indicative of a model of conjugality that assigned the suitor rather than the woman's male kin pride of place in first making public the potential union. By publicizing his affiliation with the woman, the suitor signaled her marital eligibility and availability--an additional reason perhaps why the woman are shown as seeking such a rhapsodizer.

Another indication that, in these romances, for a woman to acquire a rhapsodizer who 'sang her praises' ultimately was considered a courtship

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<sup>13</sup> S. Stetkevych has observed that "it appears that for the class of 'free' or 'freeborn'...women...puberty was marked by confinement and veiling." This may have been the case, but I would argue that this female puberty rite of 'veiling' must have been followed by another shortly before the time of matrimony for a girl or woman-- namely, the puberty rite of the 'unveiling' or serenading of a young woman so as to usher her into marriage. S. Stetkevych, *Mute* 165.

feat even though publicly her family made a furor about it is the lack of any blame imputed to the woman by her kin. It is important to note that there is virtually no content in the Majnūn Laylā romance that shows Laylā being blamed by her own kin for somehow being responsible for or complicit in the reputed impugment of her chastity. Frank Stewart notes that "It is characteristic of sexual honor that...two kinds of disgrace often come into play together. When a woman is seduced the usual reaction is both to see her as having been mistreated by the man and to view her as having done something disgraceful."<sup>14</sup> Likewise, when a woman is slandered as well, the frequent reaction is both to see her as having been disgraced by a man and to view her as having done something disgraceful that invited the slander (e.g., slander of the prophet's wife, 'Ā'isha). Yet the latter does not occur in the romance. In the 'Udhri stories, it is not the beloved who elicits criticism from her kin, but the 'Udhri suitor who undertakes such a type of courtship that is rebuffed by the woman's family; it is this type of conjugal system that seems to be under attack. Admittedly, Laylā is quickly veiled after the rise of the scandal but this occurs ostensibly to protect her from further disgrace incurred by Majnūn, but actually because the culture assigned importance to a dialectic of secrecy and revelation in its courtship practices. Then she is married to Ward--so, rather than being disgraced, she is graced with a new husband as a consequence of this 'coming out.' Hence, Majnūn's serenading of the beloved, even if by default, functions to facilitate her marriage to another man. Further discussion of how this phenomenon of the revelation or publicizing of a woman, in the 'Udhri

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<sup>14</sup>Frank Stewart, Honor (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994) 109.

romances, appears to have been a double-edged matter will be taken up later.

If, as I argue above, it is male rather than female conceptions of true love that are being spoken about in Ibn Ḥazm's quotation, it follows then that it is men's desire or male sexuality that is characterized by a split between a valuation of female chastity, on the one hand, and its devaluation through the publicizing and revelation of a woman, on the other hand.<sup>15</sup> This split or fragmentation within the male self is masked in the 'Udhri love stories through the device of personifying each half of the male self (In Majnūn Laylā, for example, we find the personifications of lover/husband or lover/goatherd). The 'external' dualities of the figures of husband versus lover or father versus lover which characterize nearly all the 'Udhri romances mask an internal dichotomy or "an unresolved interior split between 'masculine' and 'feminine' facets of the male self."<sup>16</sup> When courtship functions as a prelude to marriage, the split is configured as a juxtaposition of the lover's character against that of the beloved's father, and during the phase when courtship functions as an external to marriage, it is configured as a conflict between the figures of lover and husband.

Female sexuality, too, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, is dichotomized in the Majnūn Laylā romance and other 'Udhri stories, but this split usually occurs in a single female character. She is halved into the

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<sup>15</sup>Ibn Ḥazm's statement is also suggestive of how there existed a link between a dialectic of secrecy/revelation and female (un)chastity in male views of sexuality. As Gayle Rubin has stated, sexuality is a cultural construct— that is, "what counts as sex is...culturally determined and obtained." Rubin, "Traffic," 165.

<sup>16</sup>Erickson, Patriarchal Structures, 3.

star beloved and the wife/mother figure, or into the wild gazelle and the domestic ewe. It is through a representation and publicization of her as a beloved gazelle (accomplished by the poet's serenading) that she is then initiated into wifehood or motherhood.

To solicit such a serenader, perhaps a woman's skills in coquetry and flirtatiousness came in handy. In the Aghānī version of the romance, the scenes of Laylā flirting and whispering secrets to other suitors in the presence of Majnūn suggest that her coquetry not only allowed her to acquire a serenader such as Majnūn, but also magnified her star status as a popular attraction among the tribe's youthful men. This flirtatious aspect of her character is also foregrounded in Shawqī's play, in which another of the poet's adversaries, Munāzil (the goatherd character in the Aghānī rendition), provocatively declares that Laylā has the attentions of a host of male suitors and that some are 'receiving her favors.'

*...There is ever a throng  
At Laylā's gathering: thou couldst not reckon  
The number of her tribesmen; and she gives  
Her favours as she wishes, or withholds them.<sup>17</sup>*

In fact, I am led to consider a lover's "singing the praises" of his beloved in these stories as almost a kind of male poetic strip-tease on the basis of information yielded by the following selections from the romance of Majnūn Laylā and the love poetry of 'Umar ibn Abī Rabī'a respectively. The quotations indicate that male poets such as 'Umar and Majnūn presented the 'revelation or coming out' of a young woman as an eroticized public unveiling. Yet, they describe it as a phenomenon about which

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<sup>17</sup>Shawqī, Majnūn Laylā, trans. Arberry, 15.

Bedouin women gossiped and in which they openly exulted. Incidentally, it is worth noting that these two anecdotes indicate that poetic description (*wasf*) of women was performed by men.

While brushing her teeth with a toothstick [*miswāk*], Laylā came upon a female neighbor [*jāra*] of hers from 'Uqayl. Drawing a deep breath she said: May Allah send rain to the one who presented me this toothstick. Her female companion inquired: Who is he? She said: Qays ibn Mulawwah. Then she wept while she removed her dress to bathe and asked: Woe into him. He laid at my doorstep what ruined him without my deserving that. I implore you, by God, did he tell the truth or lie in his description of me? She [neighbor] said: Indeed, he told the truth. Her saying reached Majnūn and he wept and then recited:

*Though we thought her to be niggardly, we were told that she said, "May the rain-cloud abundantly water the ruined abode.*

*Glad tidings to the rider with whom we used to be courteous, that offered to us a twig from arāk wood."*

*She said to her female neighbor: "In God's name answer truly, did Majnūn's description [*wasf*] tell the truth or lie?" (61-62)*

What is most striking about this scene is that Laylā poses the question "I implore you, by God, did he tell the truth or lie in his description of me?" to her friend when she has disrobed and is nude. We have a portrait of two women, one woman undressing in front of another woman friend, and inviting the gaze of the latter at her naked body. The gaze is being solicited ostensibly to allow Laylā's woman friend to judge whether her male lover has flatteringly portrayed her. On the one hand, Laylā is shown being very absorbed over whether or not Majnūn's words, his 'poetic commercial,' have advertised her physical beauty and yet, on the other hand, she is

depicted complaining about how Majnūn's indiscretion has besmirched her reputation. Her companion responds by affirming that indeed the poet had done her justice to her physical beauty, that he had 'told the truth.'

Likewise, in one of 'Umar's poems about his lady love Hind, he depicts her musing aloud with her female friends about whether or not he has beguilingly portrayed her in his description or *wasf*.

*They claimed that she asked our female neighbors, when she  
stripped herself one day to bathe,  
"Do you see me to be as he describes me--in God's name  
answer truly--or is he not moderate?"  
Then they laughed, saying to her, "Fair in every eye is the  
one you desire!"*<sup>18</sup>

There are many erotic messages embedded in the bath scenes. In both scenes, the beloved strips before her female friends and asks them to gaze at her body and compare the way they see her body to how the poet has described her in his poetry. There is a distinctly homoerotic element present in this interaction between the beloved and her women friends. For example, in 'Umar's verses, Hind's friends are shown laughing and taking pleasure in her exhibition of her nudity. Moreover, the allusion to the 'fair one' in their crytic comment, "*Fair in every eye is the one you desire!*" though it likely refers to the male lover ('Umar) that Hind as well as her female friends desire, it also could refer to the female beloved that 'Umar and possibly even her women friends find desirable.<sup>19</sup>

Also, the explicit links between the disrobing of the beloveds and the

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<sup>18</sup>'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a, *Dīwān 'Umar* (Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyah al-'Āmmah li al-Kitāb, 1978) 53. Translation from A. J. Arberry's *Arabic Poetry*, 40-41.

<sup>19</sup>It could also refer to the "eye" that gazes at the object of desire.

questions they pose suggest that physical description of the female body was prominent in the poets' *wasf*. In effect, each beloved is shown pleasurably absorbed in and musing with her friends over the matter of whether the poet-lover has described her physical appearance in a flattering manner, whether his poetry has appealingly mirrored her. Actually, in both scenes, the beloved basks in her fame, delights in being the envy of other women, and is shown receiving the blandishments of her female friends, receiving their affirmation that she indeed has achieved a courtship coup. In 'Umar's verses, the playful response given by the lady love's female companions as well as their accompanying laughter also suggest they are aware of the multiple erotic meanings behind her inquiry.

I would argue that through a portrayal and broadcasting of these tantalizingly erotic bath scenes involving the beloved and her female companions, 'Udhri poets as well as 'Umar sought to further enhance the star 'sex' appeal of the beloved. By showing the beloved exhibiting her body to her female friends, by showing how she took pleasure in having a handsome lover who serenaded her physical beauty, these poets ultimately invited their primarily male audience to vicariously enjoy these poetic tableaux of feminine eroticism. Certainly, the access that poet-lovers like Majnūn and 'Umar had to women's company and circles as well as their fondness for this company presumably permitted them ample opportunities to view feminine beauty. It also allowed them glimpses into these women's internal feelings and emotions. As pointed out earlier, an 'Udhri lover-poet's intimate knowledge of women rendered him an admirable mediator in the Bedouin marriage economy. By depicting the women as preoccupied

with how the lover captures and telegraphs especially the sensuality of the beloved's body, with how he mirrors this sensuality back specifically to a community of male suitors, the poet lends both an element of the risqué and authenticity to his tableaux of women. Moreover, through a portrayal of the beloved receiving the accolades of her girlfriends, the poet himself compounds the tribute being paid to her. In a sense, the versification of these bath scenes and their public declamation allow for tribute to be paid to the beloved by multiple parties, multiple times--first, by the poet, followed by her girlfriends, and then, by her male suitors and the poet's male audience.

The specter of envy (intermingled with pleasure), as experienced by women especially, seems to loom large in material related to the poet's *wasf* of the beloved. In another of Majnūn's poems concerned with the description of Laylā, the poet mentions how others are jealous of Laylā, while she is moderate when she talks. In Umar's poem too, there is a hint of envy present in the response given by Hind's female friends to her inquiry regarding her poet-lover's *wasf*. In Ahmad Shawqī's adaptation of Majnūn Laylā to drama, there is a scene in which Laylā's female friends enviously remark on the pride she takes in her celebrity status.

Salma: See, Hind, how proudly she preens herself!

Hind: And why not, Salma? Is it not her fame that Majnūn hoists?

'Abla: Then why does she deny him?

Hind: Such is the sport of woman: we, being women,  
Are the more intimate with woman's ways.<sup>20</sup>

Coterminous with the presence of envy in scenes concerned with poetic *wasf*

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<sup>20</sup>Shawqī, Majnūn Laylā, trans. Arberry, 11.



is the appearance of emphasis on moderation (*iqtisād*) in speech (*kalām*). As just mentioned, in the poem in which Majnūn mentions how others are jealous of Laylā, he also relates that Laylā, herself, when she talks is moderate. And in 'Umar's aforecited couplet, Hind teasingly asks her friends: *Do you see me to be as he describes me--in God's name answer truly--or is he not moderate?* Yet, I would argue that 'Umar depicts Hind's character as only appearing to show concern for moderation, when actually she desires lavishness rather than moderation in her lover's description of her.

Hence, I would argue that though these poets seem to signal that lack of moderation in speech should be avoided in courtship language, because it generates envy in those (over)hearing such speech, actually, immoderation in speech (i.e., an enviable *wasf*), and the elicitation of envy are precisely what these poets make prominent in their tableaux of women's society. Though these poets paint a portrait of women who are chaste, modest and desirous of moderation in the courtship rituals, so as to avoid the envy of their friends and peers, they undercut this portrayal through various devices to demonstrate that the beloved is scarcely desirous of a chaste *wasf* or moderation in speech, and that she revels in the envy of her female friends. Also, as characters in their own romances, these poets deconstruct the myth of a chaste and modest love and courtship relation. Only ostensibly are poets such as Majnūn and 'Umar concerned with being moderate and not provoking envy, only ostensibly are they concerned with being restrained in the give-and-take of the courtship ritual. Actually, these poets capitalize on broadcasting and trading provocative words about desirable women.

The meaning behind the poet's versification of this intimate scene of the beloved basking in her fame, of her enjoying being the envy of other women, may also lie in the courtship exchange between the lovers themselves. The enumeration of the various commodities being traded between the beloved and her lover in these anecdotes and the verses accompanying them shed some light on this issue. According to both the narrative and verses, Laylā relates that Majnūn presents her with a toothstick made from aromatic Arak wood. The lover's gift elicits a gesture of benevolence from the beloved, for she utters a prayer or auspicious words on his behalf. But let us examine this transaction more closely: phallic symbolism may be associated with the lover's gift (toothstick/twig) while imagery of invigoration and purification may be associated with the beloved's prayer (rain or a downpour of water on the "ruined abode," *manzilan khariban*). The symbolism of "ruin" (*ahlaka*) appears in the narrative in association with the disrepute the lover has brought upon himself and in his verses, it reappears in the form of a different word (*khariba*) describing the "abode." Also, in the narrative Laylā invokes rain to fall on "the one who presented me with this toothstick," while in the verses, the poet depicts her as praying for rain to "...water the ruined abode." Certain syntactic and symbolic parallels are drawn between 'the poet with the ruined reputation' and the "ruined abode." Assuming the regenerative significance of rain or 'pouring water,' the image of water invigorating a "ruined abode" thus may metaphorize the beloved's pardon of the lover, or a rebirth of the 'ruined, wasting' lover through the ennobling powers of the beloved's love. Hence, both the lover and beloved

are depicted as exchanging multiple meanings encoded in the giving and receiving of both concrete (toothstick) and abstract (words) commodities. The lover, in turn, recognizes Laylā's act of generosity in his poem by conceding that she is not "niggardly" as he had thought. Given that niggardliness, in the courtship context, represents a refusal to participate in courtship's system of exchange, the lover is thus shown acknowledging that the beloved is still engaged in the courtship transaction with him. In return for her utterance of beneficent speech, he utters a poem. Again, words are bestowed or traded for words in the courtship ritual.

To what extent 'Udhri poets represent women as both the objects and subjects of exchange in the Bedouin courtship and marriage rituals is debatable, but clearly multiple systems of exchange and circulation are shown simultaneously operating within such rituals. Certain benefits are shown accruing to the beloved from her self-awareness of how she functions as an icon of desire and symbol of love in a system that circulates her. In Eve K. Sedgwick's words, these romances demonstrate that "women's status is characterized by the particular ambiguity of being at the same time objects of symbolic exchange and also, at least potentially, users of symbols and subjects in themselves."<sup>21</sup>

In the anecdotes concerning poetic *wasf* quoted earlier, it is significant that the beloved is not concerned about the fact that she has been publicized but rather about how she has been symbolized and publicized. Hence, poets such as Majnūn fashioned a female beloved that was not only aware of the meanings of her public status but also interested in capitalizing

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<sup>21</sup> Sedgwick, Between Men, Chapter Three.

on this renown. This supports my contention that poets like Majnūn functioned as serenaders and publicists of eligible women. The renown gained by the women as icons of love is portrayed as socially and specifically, matrimonially desirable.

### **Courtship Juxtaposed Against Marriage**

In the first half of this chapter, I addressed the matter of how courtship acts as a prelude to marriage. Now I will take up the matter of how courtship or the love relation, once it has served its function, becomes an external and peripheral tie--a relation that threatens the marital bond in the Majnūn Laylā romance.

It is worth noting, though, that in the romance as a whole, what we have is not an amorous bond threatening marriage but rather the opposite--we have the development of a conjugal bond that largely replaces a preceding non-conjugal one. To put it another way, what we have is not the phenomenon often characterizing medieval European romance, i.e., the development of an adulterous tie juxtaposed against an already existing marital bond, but rather the development of a marital tie attempting to mimic and compete with an already existing love relation. The lovers' relation is never legitimized and oddly enough, it acts as a mediator in producing a legitimate marriage. Yet, the love relation does not simply fade or disappear after the occurrence of the marriage. On the contrary, it opposes itself against the matrimonial bond. The tension between the two relationships--marital and amorous--is present not only in Majnūn Laylā, but in Jamīl Buthaynah, Qays Lubnā and in Kuthayyir 'Azzah. To what is the 'Udhri corpus of love stories drawing our attention by setting up these

two relations in conflict with one another?

Clearly, the tensions between the two relations are not simply a matter of story intrigue or plot; rather, the romance is foregrounding a fundamental opposition. As argued in the previous chapters, the idea of conflict between two entities--regardless of whether we construe conflict as being between the individual and society or between two social orders --is at the heart of what we may call the 'tragic' in this romance. Moreover, we see again how this idea of conflict creates an overlap between the genres of romance and tragedy.

Could we conceive this conflict in the romance in terms of two competing organizations or economies of conjugality? On the one hand, we discern an economy in which the role of poetry as declaimed by a male suitor was to create and enhance desire in himself for his female beloved. On the other hand, there is evident an economy in which the role of the serenader's poetry was to create desire for the beloved in other male suitors. In the former system, the poet is a suitor whereas in the latter system, the lover-poet is not a suitor so much as a serenader and panderer of desire. Furthermore, in this latter system, as discussed in the previous Chapter, women and poetry about women become the conduits through which a homosocial (shading into the homoerotic) desire between men proliferates, the channels through which such a desire is multiplied and advertised.

In the economy of the poet as suitor, the desire of the female beloved is valued. Women are not regarded as commodities or private assets to be exchanged between and guarded among men. A man's revelation of his desire for a beloved in poetry is formulated as a male rite of passage in the

courtship cycle, and this rite is mainly heterosexual and consensual. In the economy of the poet as panderer, the desire of the female beloved is irrelevant. A man's poetry advertises and commodifies her in order to create desire in other men. The renown achieved by both the poet-panderer and the star beloved are important dynamics in this marriage market.

Nevertheless, in the conjugal economy of the panderer, the marketing and broadcasting of women comes into conflict with the conception of women as private property and assets. Paradoxically, the public poeticizing of women by poets such as Majnūn, while it fuels this market, also comes to be perceived as an assault on the chastity of these women. Not surprisingly, a number of narratives from these stories show many syntactic and symbolic connections between the idea of a violation of female chastity and the idea of an assault on the tribe's homes or domestic space.

Yet, as shown earlier in this chapter, the poetic advertising of the beloved is portrayed as eliciting a high bride-price. There seems to be some implicit connection between the poetic advertising and the issue of getting a high bride price. Whatever the connection, the importance of a high bride-price is clearly evident in a number of 'Udhri romances.

From the perspective of the future bride's kin, it is the prospects of acquiring money and other assets that determine what is maritally permissible or impermissible in a number of the 'Udhri love stories. Often, we have the phenomenon of the lover-poet being denied marriage to his own paternal cousin because he is poor, and the beloved cousin instead being married off to a rich man from another tribe. It is not that exogamy is privileged because if the suitor from another tribe is poor, as was Jamīl of

Jamīl Buthaynah, then he is denied marriage by the woman or her kin and the beloved often marries a paternal cousin of hers. From the perspective of the groom's kin, however, the emphasis is on preventing the family assets from passing into the bride's family's hands. Thus, when suitors that come from wealthy families (Qays and Majnūn) court women from tribes other than their own, they are pressured by their families to marry within their tribe, so as to preserve the family's wealth.

These love stories feature an opposition between marriage as a material, economic transaction and marriage as a consensual bond of romantic love. Should the lover-suitor lack wealth, he loses his beloved to a man from outside the tribe who pays a high bride-price. Both 'Urwa and al-Muraqqish fall in love with their paternal cousins but their marriage proposals are ultimately rejected by their uncles because they are perceived as not possessing adequate means; in both stories, the women are married off to men outside of the tribe for large amounts of wealth. Though these love stories primarily sentimentalize the loss and suffering experienced by the male lover, it is the sale of the female beloveds or the young women, the disposal of them to rich men from other tribes, that is actually rendered sacrificial. Anecdotal evidence suggests that exogamy was generally not a marital model preferred by women. This is acutely reflected in a couplet cited by W. Robertson Smith in his work on marriage in ancient Arabia. The couplet is, interestingly enough, attributed to a woman from the tribe of Banu 'Āmir b. Sa'sa'a, married among the Ṭayyi':

*Never let sister praise brother of hers; never let daughter bewail  
a father's death;  
For they have brought her where she is no longer a free woman.*

*and they have banished her to the farthest ends of the earth.*<sup>22</sup>

Ultimately, however, the issue is not exogamy versus endogamy, for the bride may be married to a paternal cousin when the suitor is a poor outsider. As noted before, Jamīl is refused marriage to Buthaynah in part because of his lack of means and the man she marries turns out to be her paternal cousin or *ibn 'amm*. The woman who rejects Kuthayyir's proposal of marriage because he possesses no money or title, also marries her *ibn 'amm*. And yet, from the bride's family's point of view, if the groom possessed wealth, a marital bond was virtually guaranteed regardless of whether he was from another tribe. Conversely, from the groom's family's viewpoint, exogamy was a forbidden if it meant passage of wealth outside the tribe. Hence, Qays and Majnūn are both told to marry within their own tribes.

In sum, patrilineal cousin marriage is portrayed in two ways in these stories. On the one hand, cousin marriage is portrayed as a type of economic model of marriage. If the tribe is propertied, it follows rules of endogamy in order to preserve its wealth, and thus, it will not rotate its women outside the tribe. On the other hand, cousin marriage is also sentimentalized and set in opposition to an economic model of marriage. If the tribe is poor, the cousin-suitor often finds himself confronting a beloved's family who is in favor of exogamous marriage if it means an acquisition of money and property. In other words, a poor family rotated or sold its women to other tribes to gain wealth and denied them to its own

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<sup>22</sup>Smith, Kinship and Marriage, 94-95



male kin. Al-Muraqqish and 'Urwa are denied marriage to their cousin-beloveds because they are considered to lack means, and subsequently, their beloveds are married to rich men outside of the tribe. On the other hand, Buthaynah is married to her cousin and her poet-lover, Jamīl is denied marriage to her in part because he is not prosperous. Presumably, if a wealthy proposal could not be found for the woman, then marriage to the paternal cousin was the likely occurrence. Hence, the economic status of the family, clan or tribe in question was crucial. The man who marries her is either a man who buys a bride very cheaply (i.e., a paternal cousin does not have to pay her a large bride-price and her inheritance does not mean the loss of the clan's wealth) or one who buys her very expensively (i.e., a rich man from another tribe).

If patrilineal cousin marriage is portrayed as under strain in these romances, it is only because endogamy is linked with the prospect of less resources, for exogamy or marriage to another tribe is portrayed as bringing more money. In Ibn Qutayba's 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, we find innumerable stories about love relations between cousins that 'go wrong.' All the lovers are described as *ibn 'amm* or *bint 'amm* of one another (it is always stated that they were raised and brought up together) and they are all slain by love.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, if a wealthy exogamous offer could not be obtained, the preferred alternative was patrilineal cousin marriage.

Another reason why even love between patrilateral cousins, even passionate love within the culturally ideal marriage form, is viewed negatively in these romances may be discerned in the argument made by

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<sup>23</sup>Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, see "Bāb al-'Ushshāq," 128-137.

Lila Abu-Lughod. She writes regarding modern-day Bedouin marriage practices but I think her observations may apply even to these ancient corpus of stories about love and marriage among the Bedouins. Abu-Lughod argues that "love matches are opposed in principle; they violate the ideal of family control over marriage and represent individual initiative and hence defiance of the system. To accept love matches would be to legitimize as a force in social life passion that does not derive from relationships of kinships."<sup>24</sup> Though the marriage was considered to be consistent with agnatic principles, if the love between the couple was perceived as being too intense, it was perceived as a subversion of the principle and a potential threat. The couple's passion, it was thought, may set them in opposition to the prevailing kin structure.

Consensual love, that is, a love in which the the young man and the young woman meet or have grown up together, and want to marry, is portrayed as exacting too high a cost from both the lover's and beloved's kin. I think consensual marriage is portrayed as under strain in these stories primarily because it is linked with the prospect of either losing money or foregoing the opportunity to gain money. That is, the love either poses a threat to the existing assets of a wealthy family or undermines a poor family's ability to acquire assets. In either case, consensual love cannot mix with the economics of marriage in the kin network.

This conflict between economic and consensual models of conjugality is especially evident in the story of Qays Lubnā. The role of paternal kin is an important element in delineating the differences between these two

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<sup>24</sup>Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments, 210

models. In Qays Lubnā, Qays and Lubnā fall in love and marry against his parents' wishes. Whether the paternal figure that opposes the lovers' union is that of the beloved's father, as is true in Majnūn Laylā, or the poet-lover's father, as is the case in the Qays Lubnā romance, the point is that kin interests are in conflict with the lovers' consensual desire to wed. The reasons for parental opposition in the romance of Qays Lubnā become partly apparent, when, after the lovers have been married for a short time, Qays' father raises the matter of Lubnā's childlessness with the poet. Here, both primogeniture and the father's interest in preserving family property come into play, and he suggests three alternatives to Qays' marriage with Lubnā. The first of these is that Qays should simply take another wife but this time within the tribe. For Southern tribes such as the one to which Qays's father belonged, the introduction of women's inheritance laws by the prophet Muhammad, including the daughter's right to inherit from her father and the wife's right to inherit from her husband, was an innovation. As indicated by Gertrude Stern, 'since Southerners' property generally consisted of agricultural lands, the prophet's ordinances meant that a certain portion, for example, the wife's share, of such property would pass out of the hands of the clan.'<sup>25</sup> Hence, to keep the property and assets within the

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<sup>25</sup> Islam legitimated certain practices that theoretically allowed for an increase in the circulation of wealth. Among the most important of these was the rights of property inheritance accorded to women. Bouhdiba has discussed how these rights were not received easily by Arab society: "Wealth circulated at the same time as women. The more rapid the one, the more rapid the other. And if one wished to impede one, one had to impede the other." Bouhdiba, Sexuality, 112. Once women's rights in paternal inheritance were established by Islam, their practice was impeded through reliance on certain marital customs for "it has been suggested that, following Muhammad's ordinances on inheritance, *bināt 'amm* marriages increased."

family, Qays' father insists that his only son divorce the wife he has (Lubnā) and marry within the tribe. The second alternative that Dharīh proposes to his son is: "I have abundant wealth, so take your pleasure with slavegirls...."<sup>26</sup> The romance also indicates that Qays' mother was jealous of his new wife and felt that her son could not give her the attention that was due to her because of the arrival of Lubnā, whom she regarded as an intruder because of her outsider status.

In response to these alternatives, Qays in turn, proposes three alternatives to his father, and significantly, the first of these is that his father should marry again and have some more children.<sup>27</sup> Just as his father demands that his son take another wife, the son ironically requests that his father take another wife and refuses to divorce Lubnā. The romance narrative also relates two Islamic *ḥadīth* in which Dharīh is condemned for separating his son and daughter-in-law, for according to a variant, the separation lasts for forty days or many years.

Hence, in Qays Lubnā, an endogamous conjugal model in which interests concerning preservation of familial property and wealth predominate is set in opposition to an exogamous, consensual love between the young couple. Interestingly, an Islamic subtext supports the consensual, exogamous model of conjugality, for al-Ḥusayn (the prophet's grandson and Qays' foster-brother) is depicted as acting as the intermediary for the

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Stern, Marriage, 158. According to Stern, some scholars (Tillon) have argued that the very creation of endogamous practices among pastoral communities occurred as a result of the passage of these inheritance laws. Ibid., 112.

<sup>26</sup>The third declaration made by his father was: *fa-innī uqsim 'alayka illā ṭalaqatahā*. Qays Lubnā, in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 9: 183.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

marriage between Qays and Lubnā, and as just mentioned, two *ḥadīth* are related in which Qays' father is explicitly criticized for his role in the divorce between Qays and Lubnā.

The role of parental kin is also very important in the romance of Majnūn Laylā. Majnūn's parents, after their son's proposal of marriage to Laylā has been rejected by her father, pressure him to marry within his own family clan or '*ashīra*. This and other signs indicate that Majnūn and Laylā were not blood-kin. For example, there seem to exist considerable economic differences between the lovers' families. Majnūn's family is portrayed as being far wealthier than the beloved's kin, another reason why his folk are depicted as repeatedly offering to marry him to a woman from his own '*ashīra*. What is frequently emphasized is that he was from one '*ashīra* and she from another. According to Lane, '*ashīra* means "the nearer or nearest relations, or next of kin, by descent from the same father or ancestor: or a small sub-tribe; a small portion, or the smallest subdivision, of a tribe, less than a *faṣīl*." <sup>28</sup> In the Aghānī, it is mentioned that, as a way of consolation to Majnūn (after he was banned from visiting Laylā), his family offered to marry him to a woman from his own '*ashīra* but he refused. Likewise, the dynamics of the '*ashīra* also played a role in Laylā's father's decision not to permit marriage between Majnūn and his daughter; he feared bringing disgrace thereby upon himself and his own '*ashīra*. The only mention of Majnūn being her paternal cousin (*ibn 'amm*) is made by Laylā in the anecdote concerning the scandalous verses.<sup>29</sup> In this sense, then,

<sup>28</sup>Lane, Lexicon, s.v. '*ashīra*.

<sup>29</sup> Stern states: "The term *bint 'amm* is not strictly confined to a paternal cousin in the first degree, but is found extended to a first cousin once removed and may have even been used for a more distant relationship, such

Majnūn's character resembles that of Qays, who is also penalized for marrying outside of tribe, and in both romances, marriage as an economic transaction, as a contract by which wealth/property is either gained or preserved, is juxtaposed against marriage as a romanticized, consensual bond. It is interesting to note that, in contrast to Qays Lubnā, in which the lover-poet's father and mother are both opponents of the marital union between the lovers, we have very little representation in our story of the lover's mother being strongly against Majnūn's marriage to Laylā.

### The Unsuitability of the Lover-Suitor

In a well-known essay, Gayle Rubin employs the term "catastrophic social status" in her statement that "men are of course also trafficked—but as slaves, hustlers, athletic stars, serfs, or as some other catastrophic social status, rather than as men. Women are transacted as serfs, etc, but also simply as women."<sup>30</sup> For my purpose, Rubin's use of the term "catastrophic social status" is relevant because the lover-poet character-type seems to have had such a status in the literature of both the pre-Islamic period and the early Islamic period. What these love stories demonstrate is that these lover-suitor types had a specific function. Once they performed it, they were rendered socially obsolete. The literary forerunners of the 'Udhri characters already had a "catastrophic social status," but the assignment of such a status to these poets became especially pronounced in the poetry and prose of the early Islamic period. Already in the poetry and stories of pre-

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as second, third, or fourth cousin." She observes that "Wellhausen refers to the *bint 'amm* as woman of the same clan or tribe but this is based on conditions in modern Arabia." Stern, Marriage, 60.

<sup>30</sup>Rubin, "Traffic," 207.

Islamic society, poet types 'slain by love' (i.e., the *mutayyamūn*) had come to be perceived as being 'unmanly,' as being enslaved to love and women, and as lacking a 'masculine' status of one kind or another, e.g., wealth, prowess in battle, fame as a court poet, etc. Yet, it is precisely what made them "socially catastrophic" that enabled them to function as structural mediaries in the Bedouin marriage economy delineated in these romances--a point that I will take up shortly.

In these poems and narratives, we have the literary figure of the lovelorn suitor who is unable to marry his beloved. To whom does he lose his beloved? Either to a rich man from another tribe or to a man very much from the beloved's tribe, indeed from her extended family, i.e., her paternal cousin. Spanning several centuries, from the pre-Islamic figure of al-Muraqqish al-Akbar to the 'Udhri character of Kuthayyir, we are confronted with a suitor-poet type who is refused matrimony because he lacks a desirable status of one kind or another. The fact that both al-Muraqqish and Kuthayyir are told they have to go out and make money and a name for themselves--by composing panegyrics for a court patron--before their matrimonial proposals can be seriously considered suggests that these lover-suitors were perceived as frivolous good-for-nothings. Yet, while attempting to remedy their "catastrophic social status," they inevitably and tragically lose their respective beloveds to other men. In the case of al-Muraqqish (who has the requisite kin status but not the wealth), while he is away trying to gain renown and money as a panegyric poet, his beloved cousin is married off to an affluent man from another tribe who pays her

father a bride-price of one hundred camels.<sup>31</sup> Kuthayyir, too, despite having ventured out and made some money, returns to discover that the woman to whom he had proposed has married her paternal cousin.<sup>32</sup> 'Urwa, too, loses the cousin to whom he is betrothed because his paternal uncle marries her to a man from another tribe while he is out trying to establish himself.

Situated between the polar figures of the lovelorn poet-suitor who never gets the woman and the rich man from another tribe or the paternal cousin who always gets the woman are other poet-lover types such as Imru' al-Qays, 'Antar and 'Umar ibn Abī Rabī'a. But these men prove their virility on grounds other than that of love, whereas poets such as Kuthayyir and al-Muraqqish demonstrate this too late, if at all. For example, 'Antar demonstrates his courage on the battleground. He does marry the woman (his paternal cousin) about whom he rhapsodizes and both his physical prowess and verbal prowess play an important role in his ability to win his beloved's hand.

Time after time was 'Antar rewarded at the tribal feasts and assemblies for his prowess in battle or his prowess in poetry, and now within the tribes he had many friends and only a few bitter enemies. 'Abla's mother, Sheriya, began to understand 'Antar's love for her daughter, and she challenged him to speak of this love openly and in poetry, so 'Antar spoke... And 'Abla treasured the poems and learned them.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Story of al-Muraqqish al-Akbar, *al-Mufaddaliyyāt*, 3: 459-460.

<sup>32</sup> Umm Huwayrith resents his having made her famous and scandalized her. She tells him to go earn money and come back and propose to her honorably. He returns to find she is already married to her paternal cousin, at which point he falls ill with consumption. *Jamil Buthayna in the Aghānī*, 9: 35

<sup>33</sup> 'Antar and 'Abla: A Bedouin Romance, rewritten and arranged by Diana Richmond, illustrated by Ulrica Lloyd (London: Quartet Books, 1978) 45.



Perhaps, before the arrival of Islam, the poet (whose main vocation was being a serenader) who rhapsodized about a woman had a good chance to marry her; but it is likely that, with time, he came to be not taken seriously. Various excuses were trotted out to explain his unsuitability: he lacked money, social discretion, religious piety, etc. Simply put, a fictive character that is associated with a more or less consensually inclined courtship ritual is rendered socially unacceptable, just as courtship itself--a complex form of interplay between the sexes--itself is rendered somewhat irrelevant in a society highly segregated along sexual lines. But with the increasing irrelevance of courtship, the role of the marriage broker or intermediary became increasingly relevant. Hence, not surprisingly, though these poet-lover types came to be considered unworthy as prospective husbands, almost by default, they began to acquire another significance in the systems of courtship and conjugality as represented in these stories--they began to function as structural intermediaries in the marriage economy.

Primarily within the context of the poet-lover's increasing unsuitability as a prospective husband, the issue of the impugnement of female chastity began to loom large in the literature. The pre-Islamic ode suggests that perhaps the standards of female chastity during that time were different, and it was not considered disgraceful for a woman to be publicized as the love object of a man's poetry--actually, it may have been a part of the courtship ritual. However, in the 'Udhri romances, the rhapsodizing of a woman began to be regarded especially by her male kin, as an assault on their honor and as a violation of their private possessions. Many anecdotes from the 'Udhri love stories, for example, syntactically and

semantically equate satire (*hijā'*) and amorous verse (*nasīb* and *tashīb*) with forced entry into or an invasion of a home or private space. Vadet has written about the intermingling of *hijā'* with *tashīb* in the Umayyad context:

When we pass into the Umayyad epoch, *tashīb* has to be assessed in an urban, city milieu. Let us try to furnish examples of the double-aspect of Bedouin love in this context: [the first] is madness without hope or remedy which, through a superior power, allows for conventions which transgress bounds and generate conflict. The second...aspect mixes with the first such that jesting love pretends to be a victim of '*ishq*. *L'amour-folie* about which we have already talked, serves to evoke *l'amour bravade* or *l'amour-boutade* reposing on a great basis of liberty in the values and mores. At this critical instant, *l'amour-boutade*...appears to menace the honor of the tribe. Thus *tashīb*....is close to being a synonym of satire. "We believe that he [poet] only directs satire against us and only composes poems of *tashīb* about our women," say the Bedouins alarmed by the passion... Merely to have frequented a young girl is reason enough for her hand being refused by the family of this latter.<sup>34</sup>

From the perspective of the woman, the notoriety achieved seems to have been characterized by some positive aspects. It provided her with a certain stature and renown, as a consequence of which she could gain wealth and a husband. However, this came into conflict with the importance assigned to a chaste and concealed love, a love that was not revealed. In the 'Udhri corpus, the sanctity of a woman's chastity, and its violation through poetic rhapsody (i.e., *tashīb*) became a paramount issue.

Yet how is it that what made these poet-lovers "socially catastrophic"

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<sup>34</sup>Vadet, *L'ésprit courtois*, 104 [quoted previously, transl. mine].

enhanced their ability to function as structural mediaries in the Bedouin marriage economy? I argue that it is because they risked being somewhat like women, not just being overly fond of women, that they executed their role as intermediaries well. In an anecdote concerning the 'Udhri poet-lover, Kuthayyir, it is related that a woman declares to him that 'God has demeaned you since he made you known only by the name of a woman.' The poet responds by asserting that, on the contrary, his life affairs and poetry have been bettered through his love relation with 'Azzah. The anecdote, quoted by Khairallah in his work on Majnūn, is originally related in Ibn Qutayba's Kitāb al-Shi'r wa-al-Shu'arā':

In a statement ascribed to Kutayyir, the 'Udri poet closely associated with Magnun: In answer to a woman who denigrates him, saying: God has demeaned you, since he made you known only by the name of a woman, meaning 'Azzah, Kutayyir says: 'God has not demeaned me. By her, my reputation was enhanced, my life matters were enlightened, and my poetry became powerful.'<sup>35</sup>

This anecdote illustrates two important points: first, how Kuthayyir was perceived to bear a "socially catastrophic status," a demeaning status, attributable to the fact that his name acquired fame only through the constancy of being associated with a woman's name--the implication being that since the poet has been made famous by the negative associations of a woman's name, he himself has become somewhat demeaned like a woman;<sup>36</sup> second, that the 'Udhri poet himself perceived his connection--symbolic and otherwise--with a woman in a very different light and indeed,

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<sup>35</sup>Ibn Qutayba, Kitāb al-Shi'r, quoted in Khairallah, Love, Madness, and Poetry, 66.

<sup>36</sup>That a woman is shown saying this is designed to make the claim all the more 'convincing.'

he saw it as a positive and transformative experience that enhanced his life, especially his poetic abilities.

That Kuthayyir is shown mentioning the benefits accruing to him in the field of poetry perhaps suggests that 'Udhri poet-lovers risked being 'enslaved' to a female beloved primarily in order to experience an 'ennobling transformation' in their literary careers. Especially after the arrival of Islam, when these poet-lover types had lost value as 'marriageable bachelors,' and instead, acquired value as intermediaries in a marriage economy, they came to be identified principally as professional love poets and serenaders of women. Rather than being considered suitors who composed to court, they came to be regarded as poets who courted to compose. Poetry came first, and love followed.

Hence, it is not surprising to discover that 'Udhri poets serenaded women other than the beloveds by whom their names were consecrated. Some evidence from the Majnūn Laylā romance suggests that Majnūn rhapsodized about other women before he fell in love with Laylā, and once he had lost Laylā to Ward, he considered the prospect of serenading others. The 'Udhri poets Jamīl and Kuthayyir also serenaded other women besides their renowned beloveds. Kuthayyir fell in love with and composed amatory verse in tribute to a woman named Umm Ḥuwayrith.<sup>37</sup> According to the Aghānī rendition of the romance, he also asked for her hand in marriage, but she turned him down, citing his "socially catastrophic status," as discussed earlier. Rhetorically, these poet-lovers presented themselves as passionately in love with a single woman and unable to tear themselves

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<sup>37</sup>Kuthayyir 'Azza in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 9: 34.

away from her. For example, in Jamīl Buthaynah, there is a narrative in which Jamīl's father tries to dissuade the poet-lover from pursuing Buthaynah, the beloved (especially now that she is married), and in so doing he unequivocally states: "Women are replaceable" (*wa fī-al-nisā' 'iwadun*). Jamīl counters this with the reply that, for him, Buthaynah is not.

By God, were I able to efface her memory from my heart and to erase her person from my mind's eye, I would have but there is no way to that...indeed this is a trial and affliction.<sup>38</sup>

Yet, Jamīl, too, was the serenader of Buthaynah's sister before he met her and even during his love relation with Buthaynah, he is depicted flirting with other women.<sup>39</sup> Thus, it seems these 'Udhri lover-poets acted as professional serenaders, who successively or serially attached themselves to different women, whom they then proceeded to serenade. And it is because the poetry came first and the 'love' followed, because they were chiefly professional poets rather than serious suitors of women, that, even their rhapsody (*tashbīb*) shaded, at times, into satire (*hijā'*). This is another reason why the issue of slandering a woman's reputation, of impugning a woman's chastity, became so prominent in the 'Udhri corpus. Furthermore, the 'Udhri romances reveal that these poets also composed invectives against their beloved's kin.<sup>40</sup> On the one hand, they would serenade a particular woman, and on the other, they would often undercut the thrust of this rhapsodizing by hurling invectives at her kin.

Because these lover-poets were perceived to be unmarriageable due to

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<sup>38</sup>Jamīl Buthayna in Kitāb al-Aghānī, 8: 129-130.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 98, 123.

their lack of a masculine status of sorts (e.g., not possessing enough money or renown, not aloof enough from women), but also because they themselves privileged a highly romanticized conception of marriage and distanced themselves from its procreative and contractual aspects (the latter being, for example, kin right of paternal cousin or importance of bride-wealth), these men came to occupy an ambiguous position in the organization of conjugality in Bedouin society. They came to be regarded as those who courted to poeticize and not those who poeticized to court; but they gained significance in the marriage economy as poetic publicists of eligible women.

### **Sādiqa versus Ba'al Models of Marriage**

It so happens that what I am noticing in the 'Udhri stories in the way of tensions between two different systems of conjugality bears certain similarities to the observations made by W. Robertson Smith in his landmark study Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia. What I have variously termed a clash between the conjugal economies of the poet as suitor and the poet as panderer, or a clash between marriage as consensual bond of love and marriage as a material, economic transaction seems to tally with Smith's assertion of a conflict in ancient pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia between two competing models of courtship and marriage (*sādiqa* vs. 'dominion'), and more fundamentally, a conflict between two competing models of kinship or social organization. In the Majnūn Laylā romance, the bond between beloved and lover is non-conjugal but aspects of it seem very similar to a type of amorous relation that Smith claims existed in ancient Arabia. It seems that in early Arabia, what was considered extra-

matrimonial was simply not established, primarily because, as both Smith and Gertrude Stern have argued, matrimony itself was not standardized.<sup>41</sup>

I am not interested in using the literary texts under examination either to confirm or to deny Smith's postulations, nor am I interested in trying to reconstruct the marital customs of early Arab society. Rather, what I am interested in doing is to identify and to clarify the conflicts and tensions associated with courtship and matrimony in the 'Udhri stories. For that purpose, I will consider the data provided by both Smith and Stern on the marital customs of early Arabian society.

Islam stabilized an institution of marriage in Arabia. The lack of even a stable term for 'marriage' during pre-Islamic as well as early Islamic times attests to this. Gertrude Stern, in her important study entitled Marriage in Early Islam, notes that "there was apparently no definite legal term used to apply to the institution, comprising, besides its legal, also its moral and physical aspects." Stern clearly states that during the pre-Islamic and even early Islamic periods, there did not seem to exist a "fixed institution of marriage."<sup>42</sup>

In modern scholarship, the idea that early Arab conceptions and practices of marriage were characterized by looseness and flexibility seems to have been introduced by W. Robertson Smith. In his work, he notes that "among the Arabs *nikāḥ* 'marriage,' is a very wide term indeed," and he suggests that its meanings include "the large class of cases in which a

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<sup>41</sup>Hence, I take issue with S. Stetkevych's labeling of the eroticism of Imru' al-Qays as "opposed to the sanctioned sexuality of marriage," and her description of the amorous relation between the "curtained egg" and poet as described in his famous ode as "illicit." Stetkevych, Mute, 261, 267.

<sup>42</sup>Stern, Marriage, 71.

woman only received occasional visits from the man on whom she had fixed her affections.”<sup>43</sup> Smith links this class with *sādiqa* (another term for them is *mur'a*) marriages, one of two types of marriage identified by him. According to Smith, *sādiqa* marriages had a different, looser standard of chastity than the second type, dubbed by him as ‘marriages of dominion.’<sup>44</sup> Apparently, *sādiqa* type marriages disappeared with the establishment of ‘marriages of dominion.’

Smith also argues that where dominion marriages prevailed, the standard of chastity native to them was extended to unmarried women as well.<sup>45</sup>

This kind of freedom necessarily disappeared wherever marriages of dominion became prevalent, as soon as the standard of chastity proper to such unions was extended to unmarried women. The fact that in many parts of Arabia unmarried women continued to enjoy considerable liberty, after married [women] were strictly under the dominion of their husbands, is simply an illustration of the common case of a different law of chastity for the married and unmarried.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>According to Stern, *zinā* may have been applied by the prophet to “very loose matrimonial bonds and the consequent abuses thereof, rather than to adultery in the strict sense of the word.” Stern observes that, for example, the *sādiqa* system, as labeled by Smith, “has been referred to as ‘the general conception of unchastity’ while R. Smith defined it as ‘a kind of Nair polyandry in which the number of husbands was not defined.’ Ibid., 73 (cited in a footnote).

<sup>44</sup>Smith, *Kinship and Marriage*, 92-94.

<sup>45</sup>Smith argues that marital fidelity had very different connotations in old Arabia than it began to acquire shortly before arrival of Islam and certainly, thereafter: “But in old Arabia the husband was so indifferent to his wife’s fidelity, that he might send her to cohabit with another man to get himself a goodly seed; or might lend her to a guest...” Ibid., 139

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 103.



Smith maintains that though Islam gave certain freedoms to women, it allowed for the establishment of this latter type of marriage, a type that ultimately limited women's liberties far more than the older *sādiqa* type.

[In the marriage of dominion], the wife who follows her husband and bears children who are of his blood has lost the right freely to dispose of her own person; her husband has authority over her and he alone has the right of divorce. Accordingly the husband in this kind of marriage is called, not in Arabia only, but also among the Hebrews and Aramaeans, the woman's "lord" or "owner" (*ba'al*, *ba'al*)...<sup>47</sup>

He declares that "wherever this name for husband [*ba'al*] is found we may be sure that marriage is of the second type, with male kinship, and the wife bound to her husband and following him to his home."<sup>48</sup> In the Majnūn Laylā romance, the word *ba'al* appears in some satirical verses uttered by Majnūn when he hears that Laylā's husband has cursed him and his having achieved notoriety through Laylā's name. In them, the exaggerated and excessive manner in which Majnūn lays claim to being a *ba'al* of Laylā only underscores that he is not her *ba'al*, and that Ward is. He tries to usurp the position of Laylā's husband by arrogating to himself the latter's conjugal title.

*If there is among you a lord [ba'al] of Laylā, it's me  
By the Lord of the Throne, I have kissed her mouth  
eight times...(75)*

The word *ba'al* also appears in the romances of Jamīl Buthaynah and Kuthayyir 'Azzah. In the former, Jamīl's father uses the word to refer to

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<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 92

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

Buthaynah's husband when he remonstrates with the poet-lover for continuing to visit her even after she is married.<sup>49</sup> In the love story of Kuthayyir 'Azzah, an interesting use of the word *ba'al* occurs in an anecdote in which a man who pejoratively accuses a group of women of being "companions of Yusuf" has the following exchange with a woman from among the group: The man asks her: "Do you have a *ba'al*?" She responds: "I have [a man] from men whose *ba'al* I am." He responds: "You speak the truth—one like you owns her *ba'al* and not he who owns her."<sup>50</sup>

I am further led to consider the possibility that what we have in the Majnūn Laylā romance is a kind of *mur'a* tie juxtaposed against a *ba'al* marriage or 'marriage of dominion' because of historical data on the marital practices of the 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'sa'a, the tribe with which Majnūn, the lover, is affiliated. Regarding this tribe, limited information indicates that it practiced *mur'a* or *sādiqa* marriages even after the rise and spread of Islam. Gertrude Stern speculates that this tribe may have practiced a temporary, type of marriage, and that "this was a custom peculiar to both the Bani 'Āmir b. Lu'ayy and the Bani 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a."<sup>51</sup> Meccan tribes, which were primarily Northern tribes (and the Āmir ibn Ṣa'sa'a was a Northern tribe), according to Stern, "contracted marriages with tribal women...[that] were either of a temporary character or the women remained with their own people," and she notes that "W. R. Smith calls these *sādiqa* marriages and has suggested that the woman in question might be another

<sup>49</sup>Jamīl Buthayna in Aghānī, 8: 129.

<sup>50</sup>Kuthayyir 'Azza in Aghānī, 9, 37-38. See Malti-Douglas's discussion of this. Women's Word, 50.

<sup>51</sup>Stern, Marriage, 160.

man's wife)."<sup>52</sup> Often, when men did have multiple wives among the Northern tribes, they only cohabited with one wife, and visited the others periodically.<sup>53</sup> Stern observes that "polygyny as understood in the early Islamic era (i.e., the system of a man marrying a number of women and maintaining them in one or more establishments) does not seem to have existed in Medina [or Mecca] in pre-Islamic times."<sup>54</sup> But, according to her, a frequent interchange of wives does seem to have prevailed, especially among the Northern tribes: "The constant use of *khalafa* is significant. It is generally used to denote the second or subsequent marriages of a woman, a certain man is said 'to succeed' to a certain woman. Sometimes information is given that the first husband died or divorced her, but more frequently it merely states that another man succeeded to the woman in question. It is possible that this term may have had its origin, either in the custom of a woman being inherited by the heir of her deceased husband or that the woman was divorced and passed on to a second husband."<sup>55</sup>

Northern tribes such as the 'Āmir ibn Sa'sa'a, Quraysh and the Thaḳīf were characterized by more fluid marital practices than their Southern counterparts in part because of their economic connections with religious sanctuaries and trade routes--connections that enabled them to establish links with remote tribes. Among Southern 'Udhri tribes, the model of marriage was endogamous. Marriage occurred within the tribal clan, or the *'ashīra*, that is, the subtribe. Since there were no female inheritance rights among the Southern tribes (tribes of settled people with property), after

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 66, f.n. on p. 67.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 70.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 62.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 72.

Islam there seems to have been a prevalence of *binr 'amm* (patrilineal cross-cousin) marriages among them.

Returning to Smith's discussion of *sādiqa* /*mut'a* marriage (one of two types of marriage identified by him), let us consider the following passage from his well-known ethnography.

This is the case which is so constantly described in Arabic poetry; the singer visits his beloved (who may often be a married woman) by stealth and often she belongs to a hostile tribe. It is usually assumed that such relations were simply illicit, and that the poets boast of them as in all ages poets have boasted of guilty amours. But it must be noted that though the lover ran a risk in seeking to approach his beloved, the relation was generally a matter of notoriety, openly celebrated in verse, and brought no disgrace or punishment on the woman...indeed the secrecy which a man is obliged to observe in approaching his mistress is a mere matter of etiquette, his visits being really quite well known...the kind of relation which the Arab poets are never weary of describing fell under the category of *mor'a*.<sup>56</sup>

Could it be that the 'Udhri romance delineates a tension between a newly institutionalized form of matrimony, on the one hand, and the vestiges of another far less fixed and defined, older form of conjugal relation, variously identified by Smith as *mut'a* or *sādiqa*? Could it be that what I have tried to identify as a mediating relation in the occurrence of a marital one is itself a type of marital relation that has antecedents in early Arabian society?

In Majnūn Laylā, a romance generated by the Northern tribe of 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'sa'a, traces of a consensual form of relation are evident in the

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<sup>56</sup>Smith, Kinship and Marriage, 87-88.

bond between the lover and beloved. All the traits enumerated by Smith in his description of a *mur'a* relation (in the above quotation by him), i.e., the paradoxical coupling of secrecy and revelation characterizing the relation, the importance of the lover's poetry and visitation in it as well as the phenomenon of the beloved being absolved from blame (even if she is a married woman), all these traits are present in Majnūn's tie with Laylā. In the love story, Majnūn continues to compose and declaim poetry about Laylā as his beloved even after she becomes Thaqīf's wife. Hence, the 'Udhri relation structurally mediates the occurrence of the marital bond, as well as continues to intersect with this bond even afterwards. The rivalry between Majnūn and the husband persists well into the latter's marriage. In the anecdote cited below that describes a series of nocturnal trysts occurring between the lovers after Laylā's marriage, a *mur'a* relation seems foregrounded not just semantically but also rhetorically. Semantically, a number of *mur'a* traits are discernable in the interaction between the lovers, but more interestingly, both hemistichs of Majnūn's couplet rhetorically begin with the imperative *ṭamanna'* (derived from the root of the word *mur'a*).

Laylā's husband and her father departed due to a matter that took the tribe away to Mecca during the night. Then Laylā sent her slave-girl to Majnūn to extend an invitation to him. So he stayed at her place for a night and she made him leave at daybreak, saying to him: Come to me each night as long as the tribe is away. He [regularly] came to her place until they [father and husband] returned. Concerning the last night of their tryst, when she bade him farewell, he recited:

*Enjoy Laylā, indeed you are an owl ...*

*that each day draws nearer to its death.*

*Enjoy until the riders return, [for] when they return,*

*Forbidden to you is her speech (kalāmuha). (72)*

In these verses, the lover surrenders to a desire to covertly enjoy his experiences with Laylā while he can, while her husband and father are away. The reference to the owl (*hāma*)--in pre-Islamic poetry, the owl's cry represents the soul of an unavenged man--is appropriate given the fact that Majnūn's blood-vengeance right just has been outlawed by the authorities. It is noteworthy that the narrative implies that Laylā's husband is living with her folk, since it relates that both he and her father together departed for Mecca during the night.

The romances of Qays Lubnā and Jamīl Buthaynah, as demonstrated by the two citations below, also reveal that the lovers persist in visiting the beloved in secret even after she is married. From Qays Lubnā:

[Lubnā's] father had complained of Qays to Mu'āwiya [ibn Abī Sufyān] and had informed him of his interference with her after his divorce of her. Mu'āwiyah wrote to Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam to make his blood legal if he interfered with her. Then he [Mu'āwiyah] commanded her father to marry her to a man named Khālīd b. Hillizah from the tribe of 'Abdallah b. Ghatafan...Her father married her to him...[Upon hearing of this], Qays' grief intensified and he began to sob and weep hot tears. Then he immediately set out on his mount until he reached her tribal quarter...<sup>57</sup>

Likewise, Jamīl fell in love with Buthaynah and then, he came with a marriage proposal to Buthaynah's father but was refused because of his poetry. Buthaynah is then married to another man but Jamīl continues to

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<sup>57</sup>Qays Lubna in Aghānī, 9: 197-198.

covertly visit her until her family importunes the lover's father to persuade his son to stop his clandestine meetings since her husband was becoming increasingly agitated over them.

[Jamīl used] to come to her secretly and then she was married. Thereafter, he used to visit her in her husband's house clandestinely until Dajājah ibn Rib'ī was appointed governor over the Wādī al-Qurā. They complained about [Jamīl] to him and he ordered him to not visit her at her home and empowered them to shed his blood with impunity if he resumed visiting her.<sup>58</sup>

Consistent with the description of the *mur'a* tie as presented by Robertson Smith, the women themselves are not shown resisting the secret meetings, and at least one beloved, Laylā is shown inviting and arranging the trysts with her lover. All three quotations from the love stories of Majnūn Laylā, Qays Lubnā and Jamīl Buthaynah respectively, suggest that the beloved in question voluntarily engages in a consensual bond with her lover. She receives her lover of her own free will even after marriage. At times, she is shown turning down opportunities for trysts or postponing the meetings. In other words, the women or female beloveds choose to have trysts with their lovers. They choose to arrange, keep and conceal these trysts. It is the fathers and husbands who seek to prevent the lovers' trysts. However, the presence of the motif of outlawing the lovers' rights to blood-vengeance in both citations is indicative of how this type of relation was increasingly becoming obsolete in early Islamic society.

Hence, a model of courtship and conjugality that perhaps allowed

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<sup>58</sup>Jamīl Buthaynah in Aghānī 8:108.

women and men greater choice and flexibility in their interactions with each other is juxtaposed against another model in which such interaction is fairly circumscribed and marriage is viewed more as a material transaction involving the financial interests especially of the bride's family, or a model in which it is not passion but obligation, not love but duty that plays a prominent part in the marital union. Again and again, the romances foreground a tension or conflict in which what the lovers themselves desire, their own consensual desires to be together, are pitted against what their kinfolk desire and request.<sup>59</sup>

In these romances, the 'Udhri lover, it seems, is required to accept a *ba'al* system of conjugality. The 'Udhri lover is repeatedly depicted as confronting a system of conjugality that requires him to accept a "structure of institutionalized social relations that are carried out via women: marriage, name, family, loyalty to progenitors and to posterity..." all "dependent upon him making a particular use of women..."<sup>60</sup> This is clearly demonstrated in the story of Qays Lubnā when, for example, Qays is

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<sup>59</sup>Perhaps a brief look at another biography from the Aghānī will shed some further light on the clash between love and duty, passion and obligation in these romances. In the narratives (*akhbār*) on al-Ṣayyid al-Himyarī, al-Isfahānī presents a story within a story: the Ṣayyid encounters a woman belonging to a tribe and sect different from his own sectarian and tribal affiliations. Nonetheless, she expresses her interest in him and her desire to marry him, even while conceding that they cannot marry because of the differences between them. Ultimately, however, they consensually decide to have a love relation, a *mut'a* relation. They continue thus for a number of years, and her kin, unaware that it is a *mut'a* relation, accuse of her of having married a kafir. In this story, kinship and religious obligations do not permit the couple to marry, but when faced with such a conflict between the obligatory and the consensual, the lovers do proceed to carry on a consensual relation. *Akhbār al-Ṣayyid al-Himyarī*, Kitāb al-Aḡānī, 264.

<sup>60</sup>Sedgwick, Between Men, 32.



pressured by his father to divorce his beloved and marry a woman within his tribe so as to produce an heir for the family wealth, or when in Majnūn Laylā Majnūn likewise is pressured by his kin to marry within his own subclan or *'ashīra* after the prospect of marriage with Laylā fails. Or when, in Jamīl Buthaynah, Jamīl's father explicitly points out that women are always replaceable and counsels Jamīl to end his affair with Buthaynah now that she is married. But, importantly, the 'Udhri lovers are not interested in having nor able to have a *ba'al* type of marriage.

In conclusion, the 'Udhri corpus of romances well supports Susan Crane's observation that romance is "the medieval genre in which virginity, courtship, marriage, lineal concerns, primogeniture, and sexual maturation are most fully at issue."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Crane, Gender and Romance, 94-95.

## Conclusion

It may be paradoxical to end with beginnings, but I want to review briefly the multiple beginnings of the Majnūn Laylā romance to elucidate and summarize some of the distinctive traits of the models of sexuality, courtship, and marriage that are portrayed in the medieval 'Udhri romances. How these models may depart from those found in the medieval European romances, and what the implications of these divergences may mean for romance genre studies in general are matters for another study. I merely point to some of the possible differences.

Somewhat in the vein of the classical sentimental romance, one of the beginnings of the Majnūn Laylā love story depicts two young chaste child lovers falling in love with each other while tending to the flocks of their families on a mountainside. The blossoming of their love is set in a very pastoral setting. But the other two beginnings evoke a world of urbane courtliness, a world of "dalliance and fair language."<sup>1</sup> They depict Majnūn as a man who is a master of love poetry and women's gatherings (*sāhib ghazal wa mujālisah lil-nisā'* pg. 29), as a man known for his handsomeness and elegance (*jamāluhu wa kamāluhu* pg. 12-13). One of these two beginnings describes Majnūn as being astride his finest mount and attired in a princely set of Persian-style princely clothes when he encounters a group of women, among them Laylā (30). The other beginning relates,

[Laylā] was the most beautiful of women, the most graceful and comeliest in body and mind, the most cultured and finest of women.

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<sup>1</sup>J. Finlayson, "The Expectations of Romance in 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,'" Genre XII (Spring 1979) 9.

And Majnūn was in love with women's discourse, and enamored of them. News of her reached him, and she was described to him, and he desired her, so he resolved to visit her. He readied himself for this. He donned his most elegant clothes, combed his luxuriant hair, scented himself with a perfume [of his], saddled a noble she-camel he had with a fine saddle, and girded on his sword, and went to her. [Upon reaching her] he greeted her and she returned his greetings. She went out of her way to be gracious to him. He sat and conversed with her, and she conversed with him, and this continued. Each of the two of them was welcoming...and admiring of [the other] and this did not cease until the evening. (44-45)

These versions seem to exemplify some of the conventions of the medieval courtly romance. Indeed, as the story unfolds, it becomes increasingly evident that in its emphasis on courtliness, its motifs of a 'love revealed,' its dialectic of secrecy and revelation, as well as in its portrayal of tensions between the love relation and the marital bond once the beloved is married to another man, it approximates the conventions of the medieval courtly romance.<sup>2</sup>

By straddling both these subgenres of romance (i.e., sentimental and medieval courtly), Majnūn Laylā calls into question the division between

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<sup>2</sup>As mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, al-Isfahānī was one of the leading lights of the literary and artistic entourage patronized by the Buyid court. His enormous project of cataloguing Arab culture and literature in his Kitāb al-Aghānī, arose from a need to rectify the situation concerning an existing Kitāb al-Aghānī, which had been discredited primarily among court and elite circles. Thus his rewriting the Kitāb al-Aghānī was an attempt to resituate this work into a court trajectory from whence the first Kitāb al-Aghānī had originated. The project itself was a reclamation by the Buyid court of literary/musical materials that 'had fallen into the hands of the people.' See the Kitāb al-Aghānī, Introduction, 1: 5-6.

the two in the first place. In fact, according to an interpretation made in this thesis, the romance under consideration is not about a dyadic love bond between a lover and a beloved, but rather about how the courtship of the lover facilitates her marriage to a man other than himself. The peculiarity of the 'Udhri romance is such that it begins with a courtship exchange between a youthful lover and beloved, somewhat like the sentimental romance, then appears to shift into the devices of medieval courtly romance with the rise of tensions between the characters of the lover and the husband, but once it is ascertained that the lover's rhapsody actually functioned to advertise and enhance the beloved's desirability and thereby, to facilitate her marriage to another man, one wonders if the story does not exemplify an entirely different subgenre of romance.

Here, it is well to ask how appropriate is the term 'courtship' for what occurs in the 'Udhri romance. In so far as the link between rhetoric and courtship is very strong in medieval European literature, it shares traits with models of courtship in the medieval 'Udhri romance.<sup>3</sup> Courtship is a highly discursive ritual in the medieval Arab context--the composition and declamation of poetry is the pre-eminent component in literary depictions of courtship. The Arabic word *ghazala* means 'to court another one' and *ghazal* is the Arabic genre term for 'love poem.' Majnūn, as pointed out above, is described in the romance as a consummate a master of love poetry and women's society (*sāhib ghazal wa mujālisah lil-nisā*). The other terms

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<sup>3</sup> Bates states: " 'Courting' lent itself to the art of love-making because wooing a member of the opposite sex came to be regarded as a highly complex, tactical, and strategic rhetorical procedure." Catherine Bates, The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 11.

relevant to courtship in the 'Udhri romance, both of which foreground the importance of poetic composition and declamation in courtship, are *shabbaba bi* which means 'to compose amatory verses about someone else,' *nasaba bi* which means 'to mention another one in erotic verse.'

But the prevailing model of courtship in the 'Udhri romance may be seen to depart from model(s) exemplified in medieval European literature in that courtship in it is not just a dyadic (one-to-one) interaction between a man and woman (though it is that, too, on one level), but also a complex advertising campaign, a social and cultural construct that functions to 'debut' a young woman in the marriage market. A confluence of factors--that poetry was a highly performative art in medieval Arab culture, on the one hand, and that there existed well-recognized connections between the deployment of poetic language and the generation and expression of sexual desire, on the other hand--may have moulded such courtship practices. Yet, subsumed under this public dimension of courtship is a dialectic of secrecy and revelation. As soon as a woman is publicized or revealed by a rhapsodizer, in the 'Udhri romance, at the tantalizing juncture at which her desirability became displayed, she is immediately cloistered (*hujibar*) by her kin. In this, we have an instance of how the culture valued and assigned importance to a dialectic of secrecy and revelation in courtship practices.

Moreover, the prevailing conjugal model in the the 'Udhri romance does not align courtship with marriage in a linear fashion. Though this model assumes a causal link between courtship and marriage, the courtship [*tashbīb*] of an eligible woman is not necessarily relegated to the one who seeks to and succeeds in marrying her. There is a bifurcation of 'labor' in

the conjugal and sexual systems. This bifurcation is personified through two male character-types that are present in these romances: a male character that embodies a sublimated, genteel, non-reproductive sexuality and another that embodies an overt, reproductive sexuality.<sup>4</sup> Nowhere is this division better exemplified in the Majnūn Laylā romance than in a narrative (a sequel to one of the two beginnings referred to above, pg. 12) in which Majnūn, as a courtly figure attired in a princely set of robes and declaiming fine verse to bevy of women, is upstaged by a rather earthy goatherd wearing Bedouin garb. Numerous markers in the narrative, including the goatherd's clothes, his link with the goats he is driving as well as his name (the word 'Munāzil' has semantic associations such as 'to get into a fight, to clash' and 'ejaculation of sperm') suggest that the goatherd represents a physically overt, functional sexuality. The character of Majnūn is portrayed as being aware of this split in the system of sexuality and his position within it. For example, once Laylā is married, he denigrates her new marital status by describing her as a *manīḥa* (a ewe that is let), and in an encounter with two hunters who have trapped a gazelle (a simile for the beloved in Arabic love poetry), he symbolically enacts a liberation of his beloved from marriage by offering them a ewe in return for releasing the gazelle.

Paradoxically, the poet-lover's role as serenader and broadcaster of the desirability of eligible young women is also a chastity-testing motif in the 'Udhri romance. Herein is another double-edged aspect of courtship in the 'Udhri stories. Actually, the themes of both 'virginity impugned' and the conflict between the love relation and the conjugal bond in the Majnūn

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<sup>4</sup>This could be viewed as an internal split.

Laylā romance, are symptomatic of the intermingling of rhapsody (*tashbīb*) and satire (*hijā'*) that characterizes it. Several of the 'Udhri romances depict the poet-lover not only declaiming invectives against the kin of the beloved, but also against her husband once she is married, and even against the beloved/wife herself.<sup>5</sup> That the poet-lover who courts an eligible woman and facilitates her marriage may, in some cases, continue to serenade and poetically publicize her even after she is married is a good example of how rhapsody shades into satire in these romances.<sup>6</sup> In a sense then, courtship as it is constructed in the 'Udhri romance, functions both as a prelude to and juxtaposition against marriage. It may be speculated that the literary antecedents for the 'Udhri poet-lover's double-edged role as a serenader of women lie in the pre-Islamic ode, since in this ode's amatory prelude (*nasīb*), the beloved often was a woman who was longed for, but sometimes also scorned.

Continuing research on the 'Udhri corpus of romances should have much that is unique to contribute to comparative studies of medieval romance. As mentioned before, the question of how models of sexuality, courtship and marriage in these Arabic romances depart from those found in

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<sup>5</sup>It should be pointed out that, given the multiple generic modes in the 'Udhri romances, sometimes the lovers are themselves figures of parody and satire. This is certainly the case in the narrative in which he is paired with the goatherd. Despite Majnūn's courtly posture in the start of the anecdote, he comes off looking very 'uncourtly' by its end—he loses the attention of the women to the goatherd, and consequently, declaims unflattering verse about them.

<sup>6</sup>This situation whereby rhapsody as courtship is juxtaposed against marriage may be an unwelcome residual element of the system's division of male sexuality in the first place. Not surprisingly, in the 'Udhri romances, once the celebrity beloved is married, motifs of sacrifice appear in relation to the poet-lover's life.

the medieval European romances merits examination. Further work on the links between sexuality and secrecy in the 'Udhri corpus as a whole will, I believe, yield new frameworks for its cross-cultural comparison with a wide selection of European romances. The analysis of sexuality, secrecy, courtship and marriage systems in specifically the 'Udhri romance of Majnūn Laylā, not only calls into question how this romance and the corpus to which it belongs is viewed within the field of Arabic literary criticism, but also may contribute to an enrichment of comparative romance studies at large.



# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## المحضر الثاني

### من كتاب الأغاني

#### أخبار مجنون بن عامر ونسبه

هو - على ما يقوله من صحح نسبه وحديثه - قيس، وقيل : مهدي، نسب ونسبه  
والصحيح [أنه] قيس بن الملقح بن مزاحم بن عدس بن ربيعة بن جفلة بن  
كعب بن ربيعة بن عامر بن صعصعة . ومن الدليل على أن اسمه قيس قول ليلي  
صاحبه فيه :

ألا ليت شعري والخطوب كثيرة . متى رحل قيس مستقيل فراجع

(١) جاءت هذه الكلمة في حـ وليست في سائر النسخ . (٢) لم تقف على ضبط هذا الاسم بخصوصه  
ولكن العرب سمو ملوحاً بفتح الواو وهو الذي ذكره صاحب القاموس ولم يذكر أنه سمي بملوح بكسرها .  
(٣) كذا في أغلب الأصول . وفي حـ ، د : « ابن مزاحم بن قيس بن عدس بن ربيعة » . وقد نقل  
صاحب اللسان في مادة « عدس » عن ابن الأثيري : أن كل ما في العرب « عدس » فإنه بفتح الهمزة  
إلا عدس بن زيد فإنه بضمها وهو عدس بن زيد بن عبد الله بن دارم ، وكذلك نص أبو علي القالي  
في التوادر ج ٣ ص ٢٠٩ طبع دار الكتب المصرية .

وأخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثنا أحمد بن زهير قال : سمعت من لا أخصي يقول : اسم المجنون قيس بن الملقح .

وأخبرني هاشم بن محمد الخزازي قال حدثنا الرباعي ، وأخبرني الجوهري عن عمر بن شبة أنهما سمي الأعمى يقول - وقد سئل عنه - : لم يكن مجنونا ولكن كانت به لؤنة <sup>(١)</sup> كلونة أبي حبة <sup>(٢)</sup> الثميري .

فيل كانت به لؤنة  
ولم يكن مجنونا

وأخبرني حبيب بن نصر المهلبي وأحمد بن عبد العزيز الجوهري عن ابن شبة عن الخزازي قال حدثني أيوب بن عتبة قال : سألت بني عامر بطنا بطنا عن مجنون بني عامر فما وجدت أحدا يعرفه .

اختلاف الرواة  
في وجوده

وأخبرني عمي قال حدثنا أحمد بن الحارث عن المدائني عن ابن دأب <sup>(٣)</sup> قال : قلت لرجل من بني عامر : أتعرف المجنون وترى من شعره شيئا؟ قال : أوقد قرعنا من شعر العقلاء حتى نرى أشعار المجانين ! إنهم لكثير ! فقلت : ليس هؤلاء أعني ، إنما أعني مجنون بني عامر الشاعر الذي قتله المشق ، فقال : هيات ! بنو عامر أغلظ

(١) كذا في أغلب الأصول . وفي نسخة ح : « وأخبرني الحرابي عن أحمد بن زهير » .  
(٢) في القاموس وشرحه ولسان العرب : اللؤنة بالضم : الخرق ويضع وذكر الوجهين ابن سيده في المحكم عن ابن الأعرابي . وعبارة النصب : اللؤنة بالفتح : الخسافة وبالضم : الاسترخاء والخبسة في اللسان .  
(٣) نه ترجمة في الجزء الخامس عشر من الأغاني ضع يولاق .  
(٤) في ت : « قال حدثنا عمر بن شبة » . (و) هو عيسى بن يزيد بن بكر بن دأب ، كان عالما بأخبار العرب وأشعارهم وكان فوق ذلك شاعرا ، وكان يضع بالمدينة الشعر وأحاديث السر وكلاما ينسب إلى العرب ، وكان من أكثر أهل الجاهل أديبا وعظما وعدوبة فقط ومعرفة بأخبار الناس وأيامهم ، وكان لديه المفاكهة طيب المسامرة كثيرة النادرة جيد الشعر حسن الاقتراع له ، وهو من قلة الأخبار وقاد الأشعار ، حتى عند الهادي خضوة لم تكن لأحد قبله ( انظر ترجمته في التعليقات على كتاب التاج لملاحظه ص ١١٦ - ١١٧ ) .

أَكْثَرًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ، إِنَّمَا يَكُونُ هَذَا فِي هَذِهِ الْبَحَائِيَةِ الضَّعَافِ قُلُوبُهَا، السَّخِيفَةِ عَقُولُهَا،  
الصَّعْلَةِ رءُوسُهَا، فَأَمَّا تَزَارُ فَلَا .

أَخْبَرَنِي هَاشِمُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الرَّيَّانِيُّ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الْأَصْمَعِيَّ يَقُولُ : رَجُلَانِ  
مَا عَرِفْنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا قَطُّ إِلَّا بِالْأَسْمِ : مَجْنُونُ بْنُ عَامِرٍ، وَأَبْنُ الْقُرَيْبَةِ، وَإِنَّمَا وَضَعَهُمَا  
الرُّوَاةُ .

وَأَخْبَرَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ شَبَّةٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ  
أَبْنُ أَبِي سَعْدٍ عَنْ الْحَزَامِيِّ قَالَ : وَلَمْ أَسْمَعْهُ مِنَ الْحَزَامِيِّ فَكُتِبَتْهُ عَنْ أَبِي سَعْدٍ قَالَ  
أَحْمَدُ : وَحَدَّثَنَا بِهِ أَبُو سَعْدٍ عَنْ الْحَزَامِيِّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْجُبَّارِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ  
أَبْنُ تَوْفَلٍ بْنُ مُسَاحِقٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ عَلِيَّ بْنَ عَامِرٍ قَرَأْتُ الْمَجْنُونَ  
وَأُثِّبْتُ بِهِ وَأَنْسَدَنِي .

أَخْبَرَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ الْأَخْنَسِيُّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو سَعِيدٍ الشُّكْرِيُّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا  
إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ مُجَمِّعٍ عَنْ الْمَدَائِنِيِّ قَالَ : الْمَجْنُونُ الْمَشْهُورُ بِالشَّعْرِ عِنْدَ النَّاسِ صَاحِبُ لَيْلٍ  
قَبِيلُ بْنُ مُعَاذٍ مِنْ بَنِي عَامِرٍ ، ثُمَّ مِنْ بَنِي عُقَيْلٍ ، أَحَدُ بَنِي مُيَمَّرَ بْنِ عَامِرِ بْنِ عُقَيْلٍ ،

(١) كَذَا فِي ت ، ح . وَمَعْنَاهُ الصَّغِيرَةُ رءُوسُهَا . وَفِي حَدِيثِ أُمِّ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ فِي صِفَةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ : « لَمْ تَزِرْهُ صَعْلَةٌ » قَالَ أَبُو عِيدٍ : الصَّعْلَةُ : صُفْرَانُ أَسْ . وَفِي م : « الصَّعْبَةُ » بِالْبَاءِ .  
وَفِي سَائِرِ النُّسخ : « الصَّنْفَةُ » بِتَشْدِيدِ اللَّامِ عَلَى الْغَيْنِ وَكِلَاهُمَا تَحْرِيفٌ . (٢) كَذَا  
فِي ت ، م ، ح . وَفِي ح : « الْإِسْمُ بِمَجْنُونِ بْنِ عَامِرٍ » وَفِي بَاقِي النُّسخ : « الْإِسْمُ بِمَجْنُونِ بْنِ عَامِرٍ  
بَنِي عَامِرٍ » وَالصَّوَابُ مَا أُثِّبَتْهُ . (٣) انْظُرِ الْكَلَامَ عَلَيْهِ فِي ص ٩ بِالْحَاشِيَةِ رَقْم ٤ مِنْ هَذَا الْجُزْءِ .  
(٤) كَذَا فِي ت . وَفِي ت ، س ، هـ : « قَاتِبَا » . وَفِي بَاقِي النُّسخ : « أُنْمَا وَضَعَهُمَا » .  
(٥) أَيْ خَرِجَتْ عَامِلًا عَلَى قَبْضِ الزَّكَاةِ مِنْهُمْ . (٦) كَذَا فِي ت ، ح . وَفِي سَائِرِ النُّسخ :  
« عَنْ الْمَدَائِنِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ اتْلُ » . (٧) فِي شَرْحِ سَلَمٍ لِلتَّوْرِيِّ : أَنَّ عُقَيْلًا كَلَّمَ بِالْفَتْحِ الْإِبْنَ خَالَهُ  
عَنْ التَّوْرِيِّ وَيَحْيَى بْنِ عُقَيْلٍ وَأَبَا النَّضِيبَةِ قَالَهُمْ . انْظُرِ شَرْحَ الْقَامُوسِ مَادَّةَ « عُقَيْل » .

قال : ومنهم رجل أتريقال له : مهدي بن الملقح من بني جعدة بن كعب بن ربيعة  
ابن عامر بن صعصعة .

وأخبرني عمي عن الكزائي قال حدثنا ابن أبي سعد عن علي بن الصباح عن  
ابن الكلبي قال : حدثت أن حنيت المجنون وشعره وضعه قتي من بني أمية كان  
يهوى أبنه عم له ، وكان يكره أن يظهر ما بينه وبينها ، فوضع حنيت المجنون وقال  
الأشعار التي يرويها الناس للمجنون ونسبها إليه .

فيل إن قتي من  
بنو أمية وضع شعره  
وشعره ونسب إليه

أخبرني الحسين بن يحيى وأبو الحسن الأسدي قالوا : حدثنا حماد بن إسحاق عن  
أبيه قال : اسم المجنون قيس بن معاذ أحد بني جعدة بن كعب بن ربيعة بن عامر  
ابن صعصعة .

وأخبرني أبو سعد الحسن بن علي بن زكريا العنبري قال حدثنا حماد بن طالوت  
ابن عباد : أنه سأل الأصمعي عنه ، فقال : لم يكن مجنوناً ، بل كانت به لؤنة أخذتها  
المشقة فيه ، كان يهوى امرأة من قومه يقال لها ليل ، واسمها قيس بن معاذ .  
وذكر عمرو بن أبي عمرو الشيباني عن أبيه أن اسمه قيس بن معاذ .

وذكر شعيب بن السكن عن يونس النحوي أن اسمه قيس بن الملقح ، قال  
أبو عمرو الشيباني : وحدثني رجل من أهل اليمن أنه رآه ولقيه وسأله عن اسمه  
ونسبه ، فذكر أنه قيس بن الملقح<sup>(٢)</sup> .

(١) كذا في ب ، س ، ح . وفي باقي النسخ : «حمان» . (٢) في ث ، د :

« فزعه » .

وذكر هشام بن محمد الكوفي أنه قيس بن الملقح، وحدث أن أباه مات قبل اختلاطه، فمقر على قبره ناقته وقال في ذلك :

عسرتُ على قبر الملقح ناقي • بذى السرح لما أن جفاه الأقاربُ  
وقلتُ لما كوني غيباً فإني • غداً راجلاً أمشي وبالأيسر راكبُ  
فلا يُبعدنك الله يابن مُزاحم • فكلُّ بكأس الموت لاشك شاربُ<sup>(١)</sup>

وذكر إبراهيم بن المنذر الحزامي وأبو عبيدة معمر بن المثنى أن اسمه البعري  
آبن الجعد .

وذكر مصعب الزبيري والرياشي وأبو العالقة أن اسمه الأفرع بن معاذ .  
وقال خالد بن كلثوم : اسمه مهدي بن الملقح .

وأخبرني الأخفش عن السكري عن أبي زياد الكلابي، قال : تلى صاحبه  
المجنون هي ليلي بنت سعد بن مهدي بن ربيعة بن الحريش بن كعب بن ربيعة  
آبن عامر بن صعصعة .

(١) يقال : اختلط عقله إذا تغير ونسده . (٢) ذو السرح : واد بأرض نجد .  
(٣) عقيراً أي مقفورة . وأصل العفر : قطع القوائم ثم أطلق بمعنى النحر . قال ابن الأثير :  
كانوا يعفرون الإبل على قبور الخوف أي يغررونها ويقولون : إن صاحب القبر كان يعفراً لضياف  
أيام حياته فكانت بمنزلة ضيفه بعد وفاته . وإنما أطلق العفر على النحر لأنهم كانوا إذا أرادوا نحر  
البعير عفروه لئلا يبرد عنه النحر اهـ من السان مادة عفر . (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ .  
وفي ت ، ح : « لا يشارب » . (٥) اسمه يزيد بن عبد الله بن الحارث قال عنه آبن التميمي  
في التمهيد طبع لينج ص ٤٤ : « به قدم بغداد أيام المهدي وكان شاعراً من بني عامر بن كلاب  
وله مصنفات ذكرها » . وقال في تهذيب التهذيب لابن حجر العسقلاني في ترجمته : « وكان إماماً  
في الفقه وقال على بن حمزة البصري في كتاب التنبية على أغلاط الرواة : إنما بدأت بنوادر أبي زياد  
لشرف قدرها ونهاية مصنفها » .

أخبرني محمد بن حنبل وكيع ، قال حدثنا أبو قلابة الرقاشي<sup>(١)</sup> ، قال حدثني  
عبد الصمد بن المعدل ، قال : سمعت الأصمعي<sup>(٢)</sup> وقد تذاكرنا مجنون بن عامر  
يقول : لم يكن مجنوناً وإنما كانت به لؤنة ، وهو القائل :

أَخَذْتُ مَحَاسِنَ كُلِّ مَا • ضَمَنْتُ مَحَاسِنَهُ بِحُجْنَةٍ  
كَأَدَّ الْفِرْزَالُ بِكُونِهَا • لَوْلَا الشُّوَى<sup>(٣)</sup> وَتُتَوَزُّ قَرْنُهُ

وأخبرني عمر بن عبد الله بن جميل القتيبي قال حدثنا عمر بن شبة قال حدثنا  
الأصمعي قال :

تعب بالمجنون  
كثير غيره وكلهم  
كان ينسب بلسل

سألت أعرابياً من بني عامر بن صعصعة عن المجنون العاصمي فقال : عن أبيهم  
تسألني ؟ فقد كان فينا جماعة رُمُوا بالمجنون ، فمن أبيهم تسأل ؟ فقلت : عن الذي  
كان يُنسب بلسل ، فقال : كلهم كان يُنسب بلسل ، قلت : فأنشدني لبعضهم ،  
فأنشدني لمزاحم بن الحارث المجنون :

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الْقَلْبُ الَّذِي بَجَّ هَائِمًا • بَيْلٌ وَلَيْدًا لَمْ تُقَطِّعْ تَمَائِمُهُ  
أَفَقِيَ قَدْ أَفَاقَ الْعَاشِقُونَ وَقَدْ أَتَى • لَكَ الْيَوْمَ أَنْ تَلْقَى طَبِيئًا تُلَايِمُهُ  
أَجِدْكَ لَا تُنِيكَ لَيْلٌ مُلِمَّةٌ • تُلِمُّ وَلَا عَهْدٌ يُطَوِّلُ تَقَادُؤُمَهُ<sup>(٤)</sup>

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش ، ح : « الرقاشي » بانيا . مكان الثقاف وهو تحريف ، لأن  
أبا قلابة ، وهو عبد الملك بن محمد ، يعرف بالرقاشي نسبة إلى رقاش : قبيلة من قبيل عيلان ( انظر الأنساب  
لمسعودي في مادة الرقاشي والخلاصة في أسماء الرجال في ترجمته وتبنيب التذييل لابن حجر العسقلاني ) .  
(٢) الشوى : الأطراف . (٣) كذا في ش . وفي باقي النسخ : « وليدا بلسل » .  
(٤) أتى : حان وقرب . وفي ش وزين الأسماء لدارود الأنطاسي : « أبي » . (٥) قال  
أبو عمرو : أجذك لا تفعل فتح الجيم وكسرهما والكسر أنصح . ومعه مالك أجدا منك ! وهو منصوب  
على المصدر . وقال ثعلب : ما أهلك في الشعر من قولك أجذك فهو بانكسر فإذا قلت بالواو وجذك  
فتعت وإنما وجب للفتح لأنه صار قسما ، فكانه حلف بجمده والله أليه .

قلت : فأنشدني لغيرهم، فأنشدني لمعاذ بن كليب المجنون :  
 أَلَا طَالَمَا لَاحَبْتُ لَيْلَى وَقَادَنِي ۖ إِلَى اللَّهِو قَلْبٌ لِحِمَانٍ تَبَوَّعُ  
 وَطَالَ أَمْرُهُ الشَّوْقِ عَنِّي كَلْبًا ۖ تَزَفْتُ دُمُوعًا تَسْتَجِدُّ دُمُوعُ  
 فَقَدْ طَالَ إِسَارِي عَلَى الْكِيدِ الَّتِي ۖ بِهَا مِنْ هَوَى لَيْلَى الْغَدَاةُ صُدُوعُ  
 قلتُ : فأنشدني لغير هذين ممن ذكرت، فأنشدني لمهدي بن الملوّح :  
 لَوْ أَنَّ لَكَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا عُدَّتْ بِهِ ۖ سِوَاهَا وَلَيْلَى بَائِنٌ عَنْكَ بَيْنُهَا  
 لَكُنْتُ إِلَى لَيْلَى فَقِيرًا وَإِنَّمَا ۖ يَقُودُ إِلَيْهَا وَدُّ نَفْسِكَ حَيْنُهَا  
 قلتُ له : فأنشدني لمن بقي من هؤلاء، فقال : حَبُّكَ ! فوالله إنا في واحد  
 من هؤلاء لمن يُوزَنُ بِمَقْلَامِكَ الْيَوْمَ .  
 أخبرني محمد بن حنبل وكيع قال حدثنا أحمد بن الحارث الخزاز قال قال  
 ابن الأعرابي : كان معاذاً بن كليب مجنوناً، وكان يُحِبُّ لَيْلَى، وشِرْكُهُ فِي حُبِّهَا  
 مُزَاحِمُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ الْقُضَيْلِيُّ، فقال مُزَاحِمُ يَوْمًا لِلْجُنُونِ :  
 كَلَّانَا يَا مُعَاذُ يُحِبُّ لَيْسَلٌ ۖ بَيْنِي وَفَيْكَ مِنْ لَيْلَى التُّرَابُ  
 شَرِكْتُكَ فِي هَوَى مِنْ كَانَ حَقِّي ۖ وَحَقُّكَ مِنْ مَوْتِهَا الْعَذَابُ  
 لَقَدْ خَلَّتْ قُرَادُكَ ثُمَّ تَنَّتْ ۖ بَقْلِي فَهُوَ غَبُولٌ مُصَابُ  
 قال فيقال : إنه لما سمع هذه الأبيات ألتبس وخولط في عقله .

(١) كذا في ب، س، هـ وسأق قريبا، مغرا في جميع النسخ عدانحة ت . (٢) الامتراء :  
 الاستدرا . (٣) في ب، س، هـ، ح : « غي » وهو تحريف . (٤) في م، س :  
 « الذي » والتكيد مؤنثة وقد انصرف ابن جني فيها على التأنيث وكذلك قال الحماني : هي مؤنثة فقط وذكر  
 صاحب التكملة موسى الوجيهين حيث قال : وقد يذكر ونسب شارحه وجه التذكير الى التثنية .  
 (٥) بينها هنا معناه وصلها لأنه من أسماء الأصدقاء، يفتق على الوصل والفراق، وربما كان من استناد الفعل  
 الى مصدره بكن جنونه وجد جذه وصل ضلله . وفي ب، س، هـ، ح : « حائن » وهو تحريف .  
 (٦) في س : « كلب » . (٧) في ب، س، هـ « بقل » .

وذكر أبو عمرو الشيباني : أنه سمع في الليل هاتفا يهتف بهذه الأبيات ، فكانت سبب جنونه .

وذكر إبراهيم بن المنذر الحزامي عن أيوب بن عتبة : أن قتي من بني مروان كان يهوى امرأة منهم فيقول فيها الشعر وينسبها إلى المجنون ، وأنه عمل له أخبارا وأضاف إليها ذلك الشعر ، فحمله الناس وزادوا فيه .

وأخبرني عمي عن الكزافي عن العسري عن العنبي عن عوانة أنه قال : المجنون أسم مستعار لا حقيقة له ، وليس له في بني عامر أصل ولا نسب ، فقل من قال هذه الأشعار ؟ فقال : قتي من بني أمية .

إنكار وجوده  
القول بأن شعره  
مولاه

وقال الجاحظ : ما ترك الناس شعرا مجهول القائل قيل في ليل إلا نسبوه إلى المجنون ، ولا شعرا هذه سبيله قيل في ليل إلا نسبوه إلى قيس بن ذريح .

وأخبرني محمد بن خليف وكيع قال حدثنا هارون بن محمد بن عبد الملك قال حدثني أبو أيوب المديني قال حدثني الحكم بن صالح قال : قيل لرجل من بني عامر : هل تعرفون فيكم المجنون الذي قتله المشق ؟ فقال : هذا باطل ، إنما يقتل المشق هذه البتامة الضعاف القلوب .

(١) في ت : « قيس بن الخثعم » .

(٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ب ، س : « المدائني » والصواب ما أثبتناه . قال ابن التميمي في الفهرست طبع لينج ص ١٤٨ : أبو أيوب المديني وأسمه سليمان بن أيوب بن محمد من أهل المدينة . الأكثر في النسبة إلى مدينة الرسول صل الله عليه وسلم « مدني » قال الساق في الأنساب : أكثر ما ينسب إليها المدني وقيل ياقوت عن محمد بن اسماعيل البخاري : أن المدني هو الذي أقام بالمدينة ولم يهاجرها ، والمدني هو الذي تحول عنها وكان منها ثم قال : واشتهر عندنا أن النسبة إلى مدينة الرسول مدني مطلقا وإلى غيرها من المدن مدني تفرق لعل لغة أخرى وربما رده بعضهم إلى الأصل نسب إلى مدينة الرسول أيضا مدني .



أخبرنا أحمد بن عمر بن موسى قال حدثنا إبراهيم بن المنذر الحزامي قال حدثني  
أيوب بن عتبة قال حدثني من سأل بني عامر بطنًا بطنًا عن المجنون فما وجد  
نبيهم أحدًا يعرفه .

أخبرني محمد بن مزيد بن أبي الأزهر قال حدثنا أحمد بن الطارث عن ابن  
الأعرابي أنه ذكر عن جماعة من بني عامر أنهم سئلوا عن المجنون فلم يعرفوه ،  
وذكروا أن هذا الشعر كله موله عليه <sup>(١)</sup> .

أخبرني أحمد بن عبيد الله بن عمار قال حدثني أحمد بن سليمان بن أبي شيخ  
عن أبيه عن محمد بن الحكم عن عوادة قال : ثلاثة لم يكونوا قط ولا عرفوا : ابن  
أبي العقب صاحب قصيدة الملاحم <sup>(٢)</sup> ، وابن القرية <sup>(٣)</sup> ، ومجنون بني عامر .

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ ، والموله : المتشعل ، يقال : جاء بكتاب موله أي متعل . وفي ب ،  
ح : « مؤلف » . (٢) في ش : « عبد الله » وقد تقدم غير مرة كما أئبناه في الأصل .  
(٣) الملاحم : جمع ملحمة وهي الرواية المفضية في القصة وطاع على خاص يبحث فيه عن معرفة أوقات الفتن  
بالهلال والنجوم ، قال صاحب كتاب مدينة العلوم : وقد عرفت أن علم أحكام النجوم من أضف العلوم  
دلالة فلا تعويل عليه أصلا . من كتاب أبي محمد العلوم لصديق حسن خان طبع الهند ص ٩٣٩  
(٤) هو أيوب بن زيد بن قيس ، والنقريه أمه وهو من بني هلال بن ربيعة وكان كاشفا خطيا ، فنه الهجاج  
لأب به بالليل إلى ابن الأشعث ، وقد عرف به ابن خلكان في تاريخه فقال : « هذا ابن النقريه الذي يذكره  
البحر في أمثاله فيقولون : ابن النقريه زمان الهجاج » ثم أورد عبارة صاحب الأغاني هذه وقال :  
« ابن النقريه يعني هذا المذكور وابن أبي العقب الذي نسب إليه الملاحم وأسمه يحيى بن عبد الله بن  
أبي العقب والله أعلم » .

وقد ذكر صاحب كشف الفتن يحيى هذا باسم يحيى بن عتب ووصفه بأنه معلم الحسن والحسين  
رضي الله عنهما وملحنه مطروحة لأمية أولها :

رأيت من الأمور عجيب حال • لأسباب يسرها مقال

أخبرني أبو الحسن الأسدي قال حدثنا الرياني قال سمعت الأصمعي يقول :  
الذي أتى على المحبون من الشعر وأضيف إليه أكثر مما قاله هو .

أخبرني عيسى بن الحسين الوزاق قال حدثنا عمر بن شبة قال حدثني إسحاق  
قال : أنشدت أيوب بن عتبة هذين البيتين

وخبرتماني أن تجماء مترل \* ليل إذا ما الضيف ألقى المراسيا

فبذي شهر الضيف عا قد انقضت \* فما لنسوى ترمى ليل المراسيا

وسأله عن قائلهما ، فقال : جميل ، فقلت له : إن الناس يروونها للمجنون ،  
فقال : ومن هو المجنون ؟ فأخبرته ، فقال : ما هذا حقيقة ولا سمعت به .

وأخبرني عمي عن عبد الله بن سيب عن هارون بن موسى القروي<sup>(١)</sup> قال :

سألت أبا بكر العدوي عن هذين البيتين فقال : هما جميل ، ولم يعرف المجنون ،  
فقلت : فهل معهما غيرهما ؟ قال : نعم . وأنشدني :

وإني لأخشى أن أموت فجاءة \* وفي النفس حجت إليك كما هي

وإني لئبني بقاؤك كما \* لئبني يوماً أن ألبسك ما بينا

وقالوا به داء غيب أصابه \* وقد عامت نسي مكان دواينا

(١) تجماء بالفتح والهاء : طه شعير في أطراف الأنف بين الأنف وراعي الفري والأبيض غرد .

السمول من غاديا اليهودي مشرف فذلك كان يقال : تجماء اليهودي أو من معجم البلدان لباقوت .

(٢) كذا في س ، وفي ب ، س : « وما المجنون » وفي باقي النسخ : « وما هو المجنون » .

(٣) في س ، ب ، س ، ح : « القروي » . وفي سائر النسخ : « الغروي » والوجود

في كتب التراجم « هارون بن موسى بن أبي عتبة الغروي » ، تجماء قليل غروي أو غروي محوقة عنه .

وأنا أذكر ما وقع إلى من أخباره جملًا مستحسنًا، مُتبرِّئًا من العهدة فيها، فإن أكثر أشعاره المذكورة في أخباره ينسبها بعض الرواة إلى غيره وينسبها من حُكِيت عنه إليه، وإذا قلنت هذه الشريطة برئت من عيب طاعني ومتبع للعيوب .

أخبرني بخبره في شقيقه بليل جماعة من الرواة، ونسخت ما لم أسمع من الروايات وجمعت ذلك في سبابة خبره ما اتسقى ولم يخلف، فإذا اختلفت نسبت كل رواية إلى راوينا .

فمن أخبرني بخبره أحمد بن عبد العزيز الجوهري وحبيب بن نصر المهلبي، قالوا : حدثنا عمر بن شبة عن رجاله وإبراهيم بن أيوب عن ابن قتيبة، ونسخت أخباره من رواية خالد بن كلثوم وأبي عمرو الشيباني وابن دأب وهشام بن محمد الكلبي وإسحاق بن الحصاص وغيرهم من الرواة .

قال أبو عمرو الشيباني وأبو عبيدة : كان المجنون يهوى ليل بنت مهدي بن سعد بن مهدي بن ربيعة بن الحارث بن كعب بن ربيعة بن عامر بن صعصعة وتكنى أم مالك، وهما جند صبيان، فعلق كل واحد منهما صاحبه وهما يرعيان مواشي أهلها، فلم يزالا كذلك حتى كبرا فحجبت<sup>(١)</sup> عنه، قال : وبدل على ذلك قوله :

### صوت

تعلقت ليلي وهي ذات دُؤابة<sup>(٢)</sup> . ولم يبدُ للأتراب من ثديها حجمُ  
صغيرين زعى البهم يا ليت أتنا . إلى اليوم لم تكبر ولم تكبر البهم

(١) في ١ : م : « وأنا ذاكر » . (٢) كذا في ح . وفي سائر النسخ : « ومنع » .  
(٣) في ث : « وجبت » بالواو . (٤) كذا في جميع النسخ : والدؤابة : شعر الناقة .  
وفي ديوانه ونخب الشعر والشعراء في ترجمته : « وهي غر صغيرة » . وفي تزيين الأسواق : « وهي ذات نعام » .

في هذين البيتين للأخضر الجدي حن من لثيق لثدي بالوشى . ذكره درود  
ابن محمد بن عبد الملك الثريات والمسامي .

أخبرنا الحسين بن يحيى عن محمد بن إسماعيل عن أبيه عن أيوب بن عتبة  
ونسخت هذا الخبر بعينه من خط هارون بن محمد بن عبد الملك الثريات قال : حدثنا  
عبد الله بن عمرو بن أبي سعد قال حدثنا الحسن بن علي قال حدثني أبو عتاب<sup>(١)</sup>  
البصري عن إبراهيم بن محمد الشافعي قال :

يَتَنَا ابْنُ مُلَيْكَةَ يُؤَدِّنُ إِذْ سَمِعَ الْأَخْضَرَ الْجَدِيَّ يُغَيُّ مِنْ دَارِ الْعَاصِ بْنِ وَائِلٍ :  
وَعُلَّتْهَا غَرَاءَ ذَاتِ ذَوَائِبٍ . وَمَ يَدُ الْأَثَرِابِ مِنْ ثِيَابِ حِمٍّ  
صَغِيرِينَ نَزَعِي إِلَيْهِمْ يَأْتِ أَتَا . إِلَى الْيَوْمِ لَمْ نَكْبُرْ وَلَمْ نَكْبُرِ إِلَيْهِمْ  
قال : فاراد أن يقول : حتى على الصلاة فقال : حتى على الله ، حتى سمعه أهل مكة  
فقدما يعتذر إليهم .

وقال ابن الكشي : حدثني معروف المكي والمُعَيِّنُ بْنُ حِلَالٍ وَابْنُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ إِيَّاسٍ  
قالوا :

كَانَ سَبَبُ عَشْقِ ابْنِ حَنُونٍ لَيْلَى ، أَنَّهُ أَقْبَلَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ عَلَى نَاقَةٍ كَرِيمَةٍ وَعَلَيْهِ  
حُلَّتَانِ مِنْ حُلَلِ الْمُلُوكِ ، فَمَرَّ بِامْرَأَةٍ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ يُقَالُ لَهَا : كَرِيمَةٌ . وَعِنْدَهَا جَمْعَةٌ نِسْوَةٍ  
يُحَدِّثْنَ فِيهِ لَيْلَى . فَاعْجَبَتْ بِجَمَالِهَا وَكَيْفِهَا . فَدَعَاؤُهُ إِلَى التَّرْوَلِ وَالْحَدِيثِ . فَتَرَلَّ  
وَجَعَلَ يُحَدِّثُهَا وَأَمَرَ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ كَانَ مَعَهُ فَعَثَرَ لَحْنُ نَاقَتِهِ . وَضَلَّ يُحَدِّثُ بِقِيَّةِ

(١) كذا في ش ، ب ، ص ، ح ، د ، ر وفي ستر سح : « يروى في السري » .

(٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ وفي ش « في دار » . (٣) لب : جمع هبة وهي صغير من أولاد

العدان والمغر والبنجر من الوحش وغيرها : المذكور والأخفى في ذلك سواء . (٤) في ش :

« هيل » بالصغير . (٥) في ش : « في ترول وخطبت معب » و« راسب » معب .

(٦) هكذا في ب ، ص ، ح ، د ، م ، ١٠ وفي ستر سح : « وجعل » .

يومه ، فبينما هو كذلك ، إذ طلع عليهم قتي عليه <sup>(١١)</sup> بدة من <sup>(١٢)</sup> برد الأعراب يقال له :  
 « مُنَازِلٌ » <sup>(١٣)</sup> يسوق معزى له ، فلما رأيته أقبلت عليه وتركته المجنون ، فغضب وخرج  
 من عندهن وأنشأ يقول :

أَعْرِضْ مِنْ جَرٍّ كَرِيمَةٍ نَاقِيَةٍ \* وَوَصِّلِي مَفْرُوشِي لِيَوْصِلَ مُنَازِلِي <sup>(١٤)</sup>  
 إِذَا جَاءَ قَعْقَعَنَ الْحُلَى وَلَمْ أَكُنْ \* إِذَا جِئْتُ أَرْضِي صَوْتَ تِلْكَ الْخِلَاجِلِ  
 مَتَى مَا اتَّصَلْنَا بِالْمُهَامِ نَفَلْتُه \* وَإِنْ تَرَمَّ رَشَقًا عِنْدَهَا فَهِيَ نَاضِلِي <sup>(١٥)</sup>  
 قَالَ : فلما أصبح ليس حُلَّتْهُ وركب ناقة له أخرى ومضى مُعَرِّضًا لهن ،  
 فالتقى ليلي قاعدة بقاء بنتها وقد علق حبه بقلها وهويته ، وعندها جويريات يتحدثن  
 معها ، فوقف بين وسلم ، فدعوته إلى التزول وقلن له : حل لك في محادثة من  
 لا يتغله عنك مُنَازِلٌ ولا غيره ؟ فقال : إي لعمري ، فترل وفعل مثل ما فعله  
 بالأمس . فأرادت أن تعلم ، هل لها عنده مثل ما له عندها ، فجعلت تُعْرِضُ عن

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ وفي ش : « إذ طلع قتي عليهم في بدة ناع » . (٢) كذا في ح  
 وفي بقية الأصول « برود » وقد رجحنا ما في ح لأن الموجد في كتب اللغة أن برود تجمع على برود  
 ولم يذكر أن تجمع على برود ، وجمع قتل على قتل يتوقف على السماع نحو شعبة وشعوب انظر شرح  
 الأشعري عن الخلاصة في باب جمع التكسير . (٣) لم نقف هذا الاسم على ضبط معين وقد ضبط  
 بضم الميم في نسخة أ . وقد سمى العرب منازل كساجد ومنازل كساجد . (٤) أي من أجل ،  
 يقال : ففت ذلك من جزائك أي من أجلك وما أنشد على هذا :

أمن جرأ بني أسد غضبتم \* ولو شتم لكان لكم جوار

(٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ ومناهجه لوصله وسبيل البه . وفي ش وتزيين الأسواق : « مقرون  
 يوصل منازل » . (٦) أي ترايبا بالمهام ، وقضته : غلبه . (٧) الرشق : رمي أهل  
 الفضال ما معهم من الداهم في جهة واحدة . (٨) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : ح :  
 « بيه لمصرى » .

حديثه ساعة بعد ساعة وتحدث غيره ، وقد كان علق بقلبه مثل حبها إياه وشغفته واستلحها ، فينا هي تحدثه . إذ أقبل قتي من الخي فدعته وسارته سراً طويلاً ، ثم قالت له : انصرف ، ونظرت إلى وجه المجنون قد تغير وأنتقع لونه وثق عليه فعلها ، فأنشأت تقول :

كَلَانَا مُظْهِرٌ لِلنَّاسِ بَعْضًا • وَكُلٌّ عِنْدَ صَاحِبِهِ مَكِينٌ  
تُبَلِّغُنَا الْعِيُونَ بِمَا أَرَدْنَا • وَفِي الْقَلْبَيْنِ ثُمَّ هَوَى دَفِينٌ

فلما سمع البيتين شفق شفقة شديدة وأغمى عليه ، فمكث على ذلك ساعة ، ونضحوا الماء على وجهه [حتى أفاق<sup>(١)</sup>] وتمكن حب كل واحد منهما في قلب صاحبه حتى بلغ منه كل مبلغ .

أخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثني هارون بن محمد بن عبد الملك قال حدثني عبد الرحمن بن إبراهيم عن هشام بن محمد بن موسى المكي عن محمد بن سعيد الخزومي عن أبي الهيثم العقيلي قال :

عن أبي  
واحد  
سيرة

لما شهِرَ أمرُ المجنون وبلغ وتناشد الناس شعره فيها ، خطبها وبذل لها خمسين ناقة حراء ، وخطبها ورد بن محمد العقيلي وبذل لها عشرين من الأبل وراعيها ، فقال أهلها : نحن نحبروها بينكما ، فمن اختارت تزوجته ، ودخلوا إليها فقاروا : والله لن لم نخاري ورداً لتُخلِّق بك ، فقال المجنون :

أَلَا يَا لَيْلَ إِنْ مُلِّكْتَ بِنَا • خِيَارِكَ فَأَنْظُرِي لِمَنِ الْخِيَارُ  
وَلَا تَسْتَبْدِلِي مِنِّي دَبِيحًا • وَلَا بِرَمَا إِذَا حَبَّ الْقَنَارُ<sup>(٢)</sup>

(١) يقال : انتقع نونه إذا تغير من هم أوقع . (٢) زيادة في ش ، ح .  
(٣) نديم : التيم . (٤) في س : « حن » بالثاء . (٥) القنار : دجج الحمام الشسوى .

يَبْرُولُ فِي الصَّغِيرِ إِذَا رَأَاهُ . وَتُحْجِرُهُ مُلَأَتْ بِكَارٍ  
فَمَلُّ نَائِمٍ مِنْهُ نَكَاحٌ . وَمَلُّ تَوَلَّى مِنْهُ اتِّقَارٌ  
فَاخْتَارَتْ وَرَدًا قَرَوَجُهُ عَلَى تَكْرُوهِ مِنْهَا .

وأخبرني أحمد بن عبد العزيز وحيب بن نصر قالا : حدثنا عمر بن شبة قال <sup>(١)</sup> ذكر الخيم بن عدي عن عثمان بن عمار بن حريم المري قال :

حكاية أبيه عن  
جنونه بلي

خرجتُ إلى أرض بني عامر لأتقي المجنونَ ، فذَلْتُ عليه وعلى مَحَلَّتِهِ ، فَنَقَبْتُ  
أباه شيئا كبيرا وحوَلَهُ إِخْوَةً لِلْجُنُونِ مع أبيهم رجالا ، فَسَأَلْتُهُمْ عَنْهُ فَبَكَوْهُ ، وَقَالَ  
الشيخ : أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَوْ كَانَ آثَرُ عِنْدِي مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ جَمِيعًا ، وَإِنَّهُ عَشَقَ أَمْرَأَةً مِنْ قَوْمِهِ  
وَاللَّهِ مَا كَانَتْ تَطْمَعُ فِي مِثْلِهِ ، فَلَمَّا فَتَا أَمْرُهُ وَأَمْرُهَا كَرِهَ أَبُوهَا أَنْ يُزَوِّجَهُ إِيَّاهَا بَعْدَ  
مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْ أَمْرِهَا . فَزَوَّجَهَا غَيْرَهُ . وَكَانَ أَوَّلَى مَا كَلَّفَ بِهَا يَحْلِسُ إِلَيْهَا فِي نَفَرٍ مِنْ  
قَوْمِهَا فَيَتَحَدَّثُونَ كَمَا يَتَحَدَّثُ الْفَتَيَانُ <sup>(٢)</sup> ، وَكَانَ أَجْمَلَهُمْ وَأَطْرَفَهُمْ وَأَرْوَاهُمْ لِأَشْعَارِ  
العرب ، فَيُفِيضُونَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ فَيَكُونُ أَحْسَنُهُمْ فِيهِ إِقَاضَةً ، فَعُرِضَ عَنْهُ وَتُقِيلُ  
عَلَى غَيْرِهِ ، وَقَدْ وَقَعَ لَهُ فِي قَلْبِهَا مِثْلُ مَا وَقَعَ هَذَا فِي قَلْبِهِ ، فَظَنَنْتُ بِهِ مَا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ  
حُبِّهَا ، فَأَقْبَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمًا وَقَدْ خَلَّتْ قَتَالَتُ :

(١) هكذا في ١ ، ٤ م « حريم » بالخاء والراء المهملين وهو الموافق لما جاء في تاريخ ابن جرير  
لتخبري ص ٢٨١ قسم ٣ وفي ش : « عثمان بن عمية بن جرير المري » . وفي سائر النسخ : « عثمان  
ابن عمار بن حريم المري » . (٢) في ش : ح : « فبكوا » .  
(٣) هكذا في ش . وفي ١ ، ٤ م : « فيتحدثان كما يتحدث الفتيان إلى الفتيان »  
وفي ب : « فيتحدثان كما يتحدث الفتيان إلى الفتيان » وفي ح : « فيتحدثان كما يتحدث الفتيان » .

### صوت

كَلَامًا مُظْهِرٌ لِلنَّاسِ بِقَضَا • وَكُلُّ عِنْدَ صَاحِبِهِ مَكِينُ  
وَأَسْرَارُ الْمَلَا حِظِّ لَيْسَ تُحْتَقَى • إِذَا نَطَقْتَ بِمَا تُحْتَقَى الْعِيُونُ<sup>(١)</sup>

— غَنَّتْ فِي الْأَوَّلِ عَرِيبٌ خَفِيفٌ رَمَلِي ، وَقِيلَ : إِنَّ هَذَا الْغَنَاءَ لَشَارِبِيَّةٌ ، وَالْيَيْتُ<sup>(٢)</sup> الْأَخِيرَ لَيْسَ مِنْ شَعْرِهِ — قَالَ : تَخَفَّرَ مَشْئِيًّا عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ أَفَاقَ فَاقْدَأْ عَقْلَهُ ، فَكَانَ لَا يَلْبَسُ نَوْبًا إِلَّا تَحَرَّقَهُ وَلَا يَمْسِي إِلَّا عَارِيًا وَيَلْبَسُ بِالْتَرَابِ وَيَجْمَعُ الْعِظَامَ حَوْلَهُ ، فَإِذَا ذُكِرَتْ لَهُ لَيْلَى أَنْشَأَ يَحْدُثُ عَنْهَا عَاقِلًا وَلَا يُخْطِئُ حَرْفًا ، وَتَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ ، فَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ : مَا لَكَ لَا تُصَلِّي ! لَمْ يَرُدَّ حَرْفًا ، وَكَانَا نَحْبِسُهُ وَتُقْبِدُهُ ، فَيَعْصُ لِسَانَهُ وَشَفَتَهُ . حَتَّى خَشِبْنَا عَلَيْهِ نَفْسِنَا سَبِيلَهُ فَهُوَ يَهِيمُ .

قَالَ الْهَيْمُ : فَوَلَّى مَرْوَانَ بْنَ الْحَكَمِ عُمَرَ بْنَ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَوْفٍ صَدَقَاتٍ بَنَى كَمَيْبَ وَقُشَيْرَ وَجَعْدَةَ وَالْحَرِيشَ وَحَبِيبَ وَعَبِيدَ اللَّهِ . فَنَظَرَ إِلَى الْمَجْنُونِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَسْتَحْكَمَ جُنُونَهُ فَكَلَّمَهُ وَأَنْشَدَ فَأَعْجَبَ بِهِ . فَسَأَلَهُ أَنْ يَخْرُجَ مَعَهُ . فَجَابَهُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ ، فَلَمَّا أَرَادَ الرُّوَاحَ جَاءَهُ قَوْمُهُ فَأَخْبَرُوهُ خَبْرَهُ وَخَبَرَ لَيْسَى . وَأَتَتْ أَهْلَهَا فَاسْتَعْدَوْا السُّلْطَانَ عَلَيْهِ ، فَأَهْدَرَ دَمَهُ إِنْ أَنَا هُمْ ، فَأَضْرَبَ عَمَّا وَعَدَهُ وَأَمَرَ لَهُ بِقَلَانِصٍ<sup>(٣)</sup> . فَلَمَّا عَلِمَ بِذَلِكَ وَأَتَى بِالْقَلَانِصِ رَدَّهَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْصَرَفَ .

نصه مع عمر بن  
عبد الرحمن بن  
عوف

(١) فِي ش • ح • وَتَرَيْنِ الْأَسْوَاقَ : « وَهَذَا تَقْرِى بِذِي الْحَقِّ الْعِيُونُ » . وَفِي تَرَيْنِ الْأَسْوَاقَ رَوَايَةٌ أُخْرَى وَهِيَ : « وَهَذَا تَقْرِى بِذِي الْحَقِّ الْفَتُونَ » . (٢) سَبَاتَى التَّعْرِيفُ بِهَا فِي الْبُخَارِ الرَّابِعِ خَشْرُضِيعَ يُولَاقُ وَهِيَ مَعْرُوفَةٌ عَلَى نَسْبَةٍ ، وَالْأَقْرَبُ أَنْ يَكُونَ ضَعْفُهَا فَتَحَابُهَا . عَلَى ذِي أَسْمِ الْقَفَاطِلِ مِنْ شَرَى . (٣) كَذَا فِي س • ح • م • أ • وَفِي ش • ح • « غَنَّتْ فِي الْأَوَّلِ عَرِيبٌ مَعَ الْيَيْتِ الْأَخِيرِ وَهُوَ الثَّانِي وَلَيْسَ هُوَ مِنْ شَعْرِ الْمَجْنُونِ خَفِيفٌ رَمَلِي » وَقِيلَ : إِنَّ هَذَا الْغَنَاءَ لَشَارِبِيَّةٌ قَالَ : تَخَفَّرَ مَشْئِيًّا عَلَيْهِ الخ • (٤) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخِ وَفِي ش • ح • « حَبِي » . (٥) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخِ . وَفِي ش • ح • : « فَأَنْصَرَفَ عَمَّا وَعَدَهُ وَأَمَرَ لَهُ بِقَلَانِصٍ » .



وذكر أبو نصر أحمد بن حاتم عن جماعة من الرواة : أن المجنون هو الذي سأل  
عمر بن عبد الرحمن أن يخرج به ، قال له : أكون معك في هذا الجمع الذي تجمه  
غداً قارى في أصحابك ، وأنجل في عشرين بك ، وأخبر بك ، بغاه رَفَطٌ من رهط<sup>(١)</sup>  
ليل وأخبروه بقصته ، وأنه لا يريد التجمل به ، وإنما يريد أن يدخل عليهم بيوتهم<sup>(٢)</sup>  
ويفضحهم في امرأة منهم يواها . وأنهم قد شكوه إلى السلطان فأهدر دمه إن  
دخل عليهم ، فأعرض عما أجابه إليه من أخذ معه وأمر له بقلانص ، فريها  
وقال [في ذلك]<sup>(٣)</sup> :

رَدَدْتُ قَلَانِصَ الْقُرَيْشِ لِمَا • بَدَأَ لِي التَّقْصُ مِنْهُ لِلْمُهِودِ  
وَرَاوَا مُقْصِرِينَ وَخَلَقُونِي • إِلَى حُزْنٍ أَعْلَاهُ شَدِيدُ

قال : ورجع آيسا فعاد إلى حاله الأول ، قال : فلم تزل تلك حاله ، إلا أنه غير  
مستوحش ، إنما يكون في جنات الحى مشرقاً عارياً لا يلبس ثوباً إلا خرقة ،  
ويهدى ويخطط في الأرض ويلعب بالتراب والنجارة ، ولا يجب أحداً ماله عن  
شيء ، فإذا أحبوا أن يتكلم أو يشوب عقله ذكروا له ليل ، فيقول : أبى هى وأمى ،  
ثم يرجع إليه عقله فيخاطبونه ويحييهم ، ويأتيه أحداث الحى فيحدثونه عنها<sup>(٤)</sup>  
ويُنشدونه الشعر الغزل ، فيجيبهم جواباً صحيحاً ويُشدهم أشعاراً قالها ، حتى سعى<sup>(٥)</sup>  
عليهم في السنة الثانية بعد عمر بن عبد الرحمن نوفل بن مساحق ، فقتل مجمعاً من تلك<sup>(٦)</sup>

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ . روى ت : « أن يخرج به وقال » . (٢) كذا في ت .  
روى س : « قارى » . روى باقي النسخ : « قارى » ولا يظهر ظاهراً من سب . (٣) كذا في أغلب  
النسخ . روى ب ، س : « عشرين بك » . (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ . روى ت ، د :  
« بغاه رَفَطٌ ليل » . (٥) زيادة في ت . (٦) سى عليه : روى جاية مدقاتهم .  
(٧) في ت « الثالثة » ولعل كذا بحرف عن التالية .

الجميع فرأى يطمع بالتراب وهو عريان ، فقال لعلام له : يا غلام ، حات ثوباً ، فنام به ، فقال لبعضهم : خذ هذا الثوب فائقه على ذلك الرجل ، فقال له : أتعرفه جئتُ فذاك ؟ قال : لا ، قال : هذا ابنُ سيد الحى ، لا والله ما ينسُ الثياب ولا يزيد على ما تراه يفعله الآن ، وإذا طُرِحَ عليه نثر خرقه ، ولو كان يلبس ثوباً لكان فى مال أبيه ما يكفيه ، وحدته عن أمره ، فدعا به وكلمه ، فجعل لا يعقل شيئاً يكلمه به ، فقال له قومه : إن أردت أن يُحييك جواباً صحيحاً فأذكر له ليل ، فذكرها له وسأله عن حبه إياها ، فأقبل عليه يحدثه بحديثها ويشكو إليه حبه إياها ويُشده شعره فيها ، فقال له نوفل : الحب صيرك إلى ما أرى ؟ قال : نعم ، وسيتبى إلى ما هو أشد مما ترى ، فعجب منه وقال له : أتحب أن أزوجهكها ؟ قال : نعم ، وهل إلى ذلك من سبيل ؟ قال : انطلق معى حتى أقدم على أهلها بك وأخطبها عليك وأرغبهم فى المهر لها ، قال : أترأى فاعلاً ؟ قال : نعم ، قال : أنظر ما تقول ! قال : لك على أن أفعل بك ذلك ، ودعا له بتياب فلبسه إياها ، وراح معه المجنون كأمح أصحابه يحدثه ويُشده ، فبلغ ذلك رهطها فتتقوه فى السلاح ، وقالوا له : يا ابن مساحق<sup>(١)</sup> ، لا والله لا يدخل المجنون منازلنا أبداً أو يموت ، فقد أهدرنا السلطان دمه ، فأقبل بهم وأدبر ، فأبوا ، فلما رأى ذلك قال للمجنون : انصرف ، فقال له المجنون : والله ما وقيت لى بالعهده ، قال له : انصرفت بعد أن أبسنى القوم من إجابتك أصلح من سفك الدماء ، فقال المجنون :

(١) كذا فى أغلب النسخ . وفى ش : « وراح أصحابه معه رغبون كأمح ما يكون » . (٢) كذا فى أغلب النسخ . وفى ب ، س : « بالسلاح » . (٣) يريد أنه بذل الجهد فى إقناعهم أن يدخلوه معه وقبلم على جميع الوجوه فلم يُعده شيئاً . قال فى لسان العرب مادة قيل : « وقد أقبل الرجل وأدبره وأقبل به وأدبر فأوجه عنده خيراً » .

## صوت

أَبَاوَيْحَ مَنْ أَمْسَى تُخْلَسُ قَتْلُهُ \* فَاصْبِحْ مَذْمُومًا بِهِ كُلُّ مَذْهَبٍ  
خَلِيلًا مِنَ الْخُلَلَانِ إِلَّا مُعَذَّرًا \* <sup>(٢)</sup> يُضَاحِكُنِي مَنْ كَانَ يَهْوَى تَجَنُّبِي

<sup>(٤)</sup> الغناء للحسين بن محرز ثقبيل أول بالوسطى من جامع أغانيه :

إِذَا ذُرِكْتُ لِمَا عَقَلْتُ وَرَاجَعْتُ \* رَوَّاعٌ عَقْلِي مِنْ هَوَى مُتَشَمِّبٍ  
وَقَالُوا صَحِيحٌ مَا بِهِ طَيْفُ جَنَّةٍ \* وَلَا أَلَمٌ إِلَّا بِاِسْتِرَاءِ التَّكْذِبِ <sup>(٦)</sup>  
وَشَاهِدُ وَجْدِي دَمْعُ عَيْنِي وَحُبِّيَا \* <sup>(٨)</sup> بَرَى اللَّحْمَ عَنْ أَحْنَاءِ عَظْمِي وَمَنِيكِي

## صوت

تَجَنَّبْتُ لِي أَنْ يَلْبِغَ بَكَ الْهَوَى \* وَهَيْبَاتُكَ كَانَ الْحُبُّ قَبْلَ التَّجَنُّبِ  
أَلَا إِنَّمَا غَادَرْتِ يَا أُمَّ مَالِكٍ \* <sup>(٩)</sup> صَدَى أَيْخَانَتُكَ بِهِ الرِّيحُ يَنْدَحِبِ

- (١) تخلس : سلب . (٢) هو انقصر القدي لا غيره ولكنه يتكلف العذرة ، ومنه قوله تعالى : (وجاء المخذرون من الأعراب ليؤذن خم) . (٣) كذا في جميع الأصول وهو الموافق لما في الديوان ضبع يولاق . وبقي في جميع الأصول ص ٣٩ من هذا الجزء « إلا محملا يساعدني » . (٤) في ص ، م ، س ، م ، ا هذه الزيادة وهي : « غنى في هذين البيتين يحكي المكي خفيف رمل رواه عنه ابنه أحد الغناء لحسين بن محرز الخ » . (٥) كذا في جميع الأصول عن نسخة ح وهو الموافق لما في الديوان ضبع يولاق . والروائع : جمع رائعة أي مرتاعة ، قال في اللسان مادة روع : « وقد يكون رائع فاعلا بمعنى المتحول . أشهد ابن الأعرابي : « شذائها رائعة من هذره » أي مرتاعة . ونسخة ح : « عوازب » وبها كذلك في جميع النسخ ص ٣٩ من هذا الجزء . والعوازب : جمع عازبة من عزب بمعنى غاب . (٦) طيف جنة : سر من الجن . (٧) في كتاب الشعر والشعراء . « ولا لم الاعتداء التكلد » . والقم : الجنود ، وقيل : طرف من يلزم بالإنسان . (٨) الأحناء : جمع حنوء وهو كثر . به أعرج كظم الجناح (العظم الذي ينبت عليه الحاجب) والهي والضلع . (٩) العدى : الجسد من آدمي بعد موته ، ويقطع على الرجل التحف الجسد ، كما أنه يطلق على النفوس التي يسعه المصوت عقب مباحه واجبا إليه من نحو إجليل والبناء المرتفع .

الفناء لإسحاق خفيفٌ ثقيلٌ <sup>(١)</sup> أولٌ بإطلاق الوتر في مجرى البصرة <sup>(٢)</sup> وفيه لابن  
جامع هزجٌ من رواية المشامي وهي قصيدة طويلة .  
ومما يُغنى فيه منها قوله :

### صوت

فلم أرَ ليلَ بعد موقِفِ ساعة • بخيفٍ مِنِّي ترمي جِمارَ المحصَّبِ  
ويُبدى الحصى منها إذا قدَّفت به • من البُرْدِ أطرافَ البنانِ المخفَّبِ  
فأصبحتُ من ليلِ الفداةِ كاظِرٍ • مع الصبحِ في أعقابِ نجمٍ مُغرِبِ  
ألا إنما غادرتِ يا أمَّ مالكٍ • صدَى أَيْمانٍ تذهبُ به الريحُ يذهبِ  
فيه ثِقيلٌ أولٌ مطلقٌ باستهلال ، ذكر ابنُ المكي أنه لأبيه يحيى ، وذكر  
المشامي أنه للوائق ، وذكر حبش أنه لابن مُحرز ، وهو في جامع أغاني سليمان  
منسوبٌ إليه .

أنشدني الأخفش عن أبي سعيد الشكري عن محمد بن حبيب الجعوني :  
فوالله ثم الله إِنِّي لَدَائِبٌ • أَفكرُ ما ذنبي إليها وأعجبُ  
رواها ما أدري علامَ قتلني • وإني أُموري فيك يا بئيلَ أركبُ  
أأقطعُ جبلَ الوصلِ فلتوتُ دونه • أمْ أشربُ رنقا منكُم يسُّ شربُ  
أمْ أهرُبُ حتى لا أرى في مجاورا • أمْ أصنعُ ماذا أمْ أبيعُ فأغلبُ  
فأبهما بالبئيلِ ما ترتضيه • فإني لمظلمٌ وإني لمُعْتَبُ

(١) في ٢٠٤ ، ٢ : « ثاني ثِقيلٌ أولٌ » . (٢) في ٢٠٤ ، ٣ : « في مجرى البصرة » .

من روايته » . (٣) رقا : كذا .

أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ الْجَوْهَرِيُّ وَحَبِيبُ بْنُ نَصْرِ الْمُهَلَّبِيُّ قَالَا : حَدَّثَنَا  
عُمَرُ بْنُ شَيْبَةَ قَالَ : ذَكَرَ حُشَامُ بْنُ الْكَلْبِيِّ وَوَافَقَهُ فِي رِوَايَةِ أَبِي نَصْرِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَتَمٍ  
وَأَخْبَرَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أَبِي سَعْدٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الصَّبَّاحِ عَنْ حُشَامِ  
أَبْنِ الْكَلْبِيِّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ :

مع مع أبيه  
مكة لخران  
ردصية  
استزادة  
ردواب

أَنَّ أَبَا الْمُجَنُّونَ وَأَتَمَّهُ وَرَجَالَ عَشِيرَتِهِ أَجْتَمَعُوا إِلَى أَبِي لَيْلَى فَوَعَّظُوهُ وَنَاشَدُوهُ اللَّهَ  
وَالرَّحِمَةَ ، وَقَالُوا لَهُ : إِنَّ هَذَا الرَّجُلَ هَذَاكَ ، وَقَبْلَ ذَلِكَ تَقَى أَقْبَحَ مِنَ الْهَلَاكِ بِذَهَابِ  
عَقْلِهِ ، وَإِنَّكَ فَاجِعٌ بِهِ أَبَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ، فَتَشَدَّنَاكَ اللَّهُ وَالرَّحْمَ أَنْ تَفْعَلَ ذَلِكَ ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا هِيَ  
أَشْرَفُ مِنْهُ ، وَلَا لَكَ مِثْلُ مَا لِي أَبِيهِ ، وَقَدْ حَكَمْتُ فِي الْمَثَرِ ، وَإِنْ شِئْتَ أَنْ يَجْلَعَ  
نَفْسُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ مَالِهِ فَعَلَّ : فَأَبَى وَحَلَفَ بِاللَّهِ وَبِطَلَاقِ أَنْفَاهُ <sup>(١)</sup> أَنَّهُ لَا يَرْجُوهُ إِلَّا بِأَهَا أَبَدًا ،  
وَقَالَ : أَنْفَضْتُ نَفْسِي وَعَشِيرَتِي وَآرَى مَا لِي بِأَهْلٍ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ ، وَأَسِمُ ابْنَتِي بِبَيْسَمِ  
نَضِيعَةٍ : فَانْصَرَفُوا عَنْهُ ، وَخَالَفَهُمْ لَوْ قَتَلَهُ فَرَجَحَهَا رَجُلًا مِنْ قَوْمِهَا وَأَدْخَلَهَا إِلَيْهِ ،  
فَمَا أَتَى إِلَّا وَقَدْ جَاءَ بِهِ . وَبَلَغَهُ الْخَبَرُ فَأَيْسَ مِنْهَا حِينَئِذٍ وَزَالَ عَقْلُهُ جَمَدًا ، فَقَالَ  
الْحَيُّ لَا بَيْسَ : اجْعِجْ بِهِ إِلَى مَكَّةَ وَأَدْعُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَهُ ، وَمُرَّه أَنْ يَتَعَلَّقَ بِاسْتَارِ  
الْكَعْبَةِ . فَبَالَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُعَاقِبَهُ مَا بِهِ وَيُفْضِلَهَا إِلَيْهِ ، فَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَهُ مِنْ هَذَا  
الْبَلَاءِ . خَجَّ بِهِ أَبُودُ ، فَلَمَّا صَارُوا بَيْنَى سَمْعٍ صَاحُوا فِي اللَّيْلِ بِصَوْتٍ : يَا لَيْلَى ، فَصَرَخَ  
صَرِيحَةً ضَوًّا أَنَّ نَفْسَهُ قَدْ تَلَقَّتْ وَسَقَطَ مَفْشِيًّا عَلَيْهِ ، فَلَمْ يَزَلْ كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ ثُمَّ  
أَفَاقَ حَاتِلُ اللَّوْنِ ذَهَلًا ، فَتَنَسَّأَ يَقُولُ :

(١) كَذَا فِي نَظْمِ السَّخِّ . رَوَى : « بَطْلَانُ أَمْرَاتِهِ » . (٢) كَذَا فِي نَظْمِ

السَّخِّ . رَوَى : « وَخَرَجَهَا إِلَيْهِ » . رَوَى : « وَأَدْخَلَهَا إِلَيْهِ » . (٣) حَاتِلُ

الْوَلَدِ : مُتَعَبِهِ .

## صوت

عَرَضْتُ عَلَى قَلْبِي الْعَزَاءَ فَقَالَ لِي • مِنْ الْآنَ فَإِنِّسْ لَا أَعَزَّكَ مِنْ صَبْرِ  
 إِذَا بَانَ مِنْ نَهْوِي وَأَصْبَحَ نَائِبًا • فَلَا شَيْءَ أَجْدَى مِنْ حُلُولِكَ فِي الْقَبْرِ  
 وَدَاعٍ دَعَا إِذْ نَحْنُ بِالْخَيْفِ مِنْ مَنَى • فَبَيَّجَ أَطْرَابَ الْفُؤَادِ وَمَا يَدْرِى  
 دَعَا بِأَسْمٍ لَيْلِي غَيْرَهَا فَكُنَّا • أَطَارِبِلِي طَائِرًا كَانَ فِي صَدْرِي  
 دَعَا بِأَسْمٍ لَيْلِي ضَلَّلَ اللَّهُ سَعْبَهُ • وَلَيْلَى بَارِضٍ عَنْهُ نَازِحَةٌ قَفِيرٌ  
 الْغَنَاءَ لَعَرِيبَ خَفِيفٌ تَهِيلٌ - ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ أَبُوه : تَعَلَّقْ بِأَسْتَارِ الْكَعْبَةِ وَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ  
 أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَكَ مِنْ حَبِّ لَيْلٍ ، فَتَعَلَّقَ بِأَسْتَارِ الْكَعْبَةِ وَقَالَ : اللَّهُمَّ زِدْنِي لِلَّيْلِ حُبًّا وَبِهَا  
 كَلَفًا وَلَا تُنِسْنِي ذِكْرَهَا أَبَدًا ، فَهَامَ حِينَئِذٍ وَاخْتَلَطَ فَلَمْ يَضْطَبْ • قَالُوا : فَكَانَ يَهِيمُ  
 فِي الْبَرِّيَّةِ مَعَ الْوَحْشِ وَلَا يَأْكُلُ إِلَّا مَا يَنْبُتُ فِي الْبَرِّيَّةِ مِنْ بَقْلِ وَلَا يَشْرَبُ إِلَّا مَعَ  
 الْغَنَاءِ إِذَا وَرَدَتْ مَنَاهِلُهَا ، وَطَالَ شَمْرُ جَسَدِهِ وَرَأْسُهُ وَأَنْفَتُهُ الظَّبَاءُ وَالْوَحْشُ  
 فَكَانَتْ لَا تَنْفِرُ مِنْهُ ، وَجَعَلَ يَهِيمُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ حَدُودَ الشَّامِ ، فَإِذَا ثَابَ إِلَيْهِ عَقْلُهُ سَأَلَ مَنْ  
 يَمُرُّ بِهِ مِنْ أَحْيَاءِ الْعَرَبِ عَنْ نَجْدٍ ، فَيَقَالُ لَهُ : وَأَيْنَ أَنْتَ مِنْ نَجْدٍ ! قَدْ شَارَفْتَ  
 الشَّامَ ! أَنْتَ فِي مَوْضِعٍ كَذَا ، فَيَقُولُ : فَارُونِي وَجْهَةَ الطَّرِيقِ ، فَيَرْحَمُونَهُ وَيَعْرِضُونَ  
 عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَحْمِلُوهُ أَوْ يَكْسُوهُ فَيَأْبَى ، فَيَدُلُّونَهُ عَلَى طَرِيقٍ نَجْدٍ فَيَتَوَجَّهُ نَحْوَهُ .

أَخْبَرَنِي عَمِّي قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي الْكُرَّانِيُّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الْعُمَيْرِيُّ عَنْ الْهَيْثَمِ بْنِ عَدِيِّ وَأَخْبَرَنَا  
 حَيْبُ بْنُ نَصْرٍ الْمُهَلَّبِيُّ وَاحِدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ الْجَوْهَرِيُّ قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ شَبَّةَ  
 قَالَ ذَكَرَ الْهَيْثَمُ بْنُ عَدِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي يَسْكِينٍ قَالَ :

(١) كَذَا فِي جَمِيعِ الْأَصُولِ ، وَالْأَطْرَابُ : جَمْعُ طَرِبَ وَهُوَ خَفَّةٌ تَعْتَرِي الشَّخْصَ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْفَرَحِ  
 أَوْ الْخُزْنِ • وَالَّذِي فِي دِيْوَانِهِ وَتَحَابُّ الشَّمْرِ وَالشَّمْرَاءِ : « أَهْزَان » • (٢) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ  
 النُّسخِ • وَفِي : « فَهَاجَ » • (٣) فِي : « أَيْنَ أَنْتَ » بِدُونِ وَاو •

خرج منا قتي حتى إذا كان بين ميمونة<sup>(١)</sup> وجماعة فوق بعض تلك الجبال . وإذا معهم قتي أيضا طوال جمدة<sup>(٢)</sup> كأحسن من رأيت من الرجال على هزال منه وصغرة ، وإذا هم متعلقون به ، فسألت عنه ، فقيل لي : هذا قيس المجنون خرج به أبوه يستجير له بالبيت ، وهو على أن يأتي به قبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم ليدعوه له هناك لعله يكشف ما به ، فإنه يصنع بنفسه صنعا يرحمه منه عدوه . يقول :  
 أخرجوني لعلني ألتئم صبا نجيد ، فيخرجونه فيتوجهون به نحو نجيد . ونحن مع ذلك نخاف أن يلقى نفسه من الجبل ، فإن شئت الأجرد نوت منه فأخبرته أنك أقبلت من نجيد ، فدنوت منه وأقبلوا عليه فقالوا له : يا أبا المهدي ، هذا القتي أقبل من نجيد ، فتنفس تنفسا طنت أن كبده قد أنصدعت ، ثم جعل يسألني عن واد واد وموضع موضع ، وأنا أخبره وهو يكي أحربكاه وأوجعه للقلب ، ثم أنشأ يقول :  
 ألا ليت شعري عن عوارضتي قتا .<sup>(٣)</sup> لطول الليالي هل تغيتا بعدي .  
 وهل جارتانا بالتييل إلى الحمى .<sup>(٤)</sup> على عهدنا أم لم تدوما على العهد .

(١) قال في ياقوت : ربيعة ميمونة بمكة ، وقال البكري في معجم ما أشبه من ٦٩ : هو بن ميمونة بن البيت والمجون بأطبع مكة ، وهي منسوبة إلى ميمونة بن الحضرمي عفرها في الحاقلة ، وعندنا توفى أبو جعفر المنصور . (٢) كذا في ش ، ح . وفي باقي النسخ : « قاذ » بالباء . (٣) الطوال بالهمزة : انقراط الطول . (٤) كذا في ش ، ح . والحمد : أن يكون الرجل معصوب الجوارح شديد الأسر وخالق غير متريخ ولا مضطرب ، وفي باقي النسخ « جمدة » بالطاء . ولم نجده في كتب اللسان التي بأيدينا ومفاله ذكر . (٥) زيادة في ب ، ص . (٦) في ش ، ح : « تنصا خلت أن كبده انط » . (٧) في ش ، ح : « يسألني » . (٨) في ب ، ص : « قبا » بالياء . وهو تحريف . انظر الحاشية رقم ٣ ص ٣٥٣ من الجزء الأول من الأغاني . وقنا وعوارضة : جيلان لبي قزاة . (٩) كذا بالديوان وهو جيل نجيد . وفي ب ، ص : « التيل » . وفي ح ، د : « التيل » . وفي م ، ن : « القيل » . وفي ش : « البتيل » ولعل ما في هذه النسخ تحريف قلة . قف على واحد من هذه الأقطاظ اسم موضع . وفي ١ : قلا عن نسخة أخرى : « التيق » .

وعن علويات الرياح إذا جرت • بريح الخزامى هل نهب على نجد  
وعن أخوان الزمل ما هو فاعل • إذا هو أترى لبنة يترى جمد<sup>(٢)</sup>  
وهل أنفضت الدهر أنفاد لي • على لاحت المتين مندلي الوحد<sup>(٣)</sup>  
وهل أسمع الدهر أصوات هجمة • تحدر من نيز خصب إلى وفد<sup>(٤)</sup>

أخبرني عمي قال حدثنا الكزاني قال حدثنا العمري عن الهيثم بن عدي  
والعتبي قالا :

سؤاله زوج ليل  
عن عشرة معها

مر المجنون بزوج ليل وهو جالس يصطلي في يوم شات، وقد أتى ابن عم له  
في حق المجنون حاجة، فوقف عليه ثم أنشأ يقول :

### صوت

ربك هل صمت إليك ليل • قيل الصبح أو قبلت قاه<sup>(٥)</sup>  
وهل رقت عليك قرون ليل • ريف الأخوان في نفاها<sup>(٦)</sup>

(١) علويات : جمع علوية نسبة إلى العالية وهو ما فوق أرض نجد إلى نهاية وهذه النسبة نادرة  
واقياس عالي • (٢) يقال : تراب جمد أي تيد • (٣) لاحت : ضامر من قوهم لحق القوس  
لحوقاً أي ضمر • واشتد : جنباً الظهر عن اثنين والثمال، والواحد من يذكر ويؤنث، والمندلي : السريع •  
يقال : اندلقت الخيل إذا خرجت فأمرعت • والوحد : ضرب من سير الخيل والإبل وهو سعة الخطر  
في المشي • (٤) الهجمة : القطعة الضخمة من الإبل • والوحد : المكان المضمّن من الأرض •  
(٥) كذا في س • ! والتشيز : المكان الموضع • وفي بقية النسخ : « تشيز » بالراء المهملة وهو  
تحريف • (٦) في س : « مر المجنون ذات يوم الخ » • (٧) في خزانة الأدب  
للبيدادي ج ٤ ص ٢١٠ : « بدئك » • (٨) في خزانة الأدب للبيدادي ج ٤ ص ٢١١ :  
« وهل قبلت قيل الصبح قاه » • (٩) قال البيدادي في خزانة الأدب ج ٤ ص ٢١٣ :  
« رقت بفتح الراء المهملة من رف لونه يرف بالكسر ويقا ورقاً إذا برق وتلا لا » أراد شدة سواد شعرها •  
وصحف ابن الملا في شرح المعنى تجمل المهمة صحبة فقال : الزيف : إهداء النورس إلى بطها، وغفل  
عن قوله : ريف الأخوان وهي البايونج • والقرون : الدواب جمع قرن بفتح القاف وسكون الراء • اه  
والظاهر أنه من ريف الثبت وهو احترازه نفازة وحسن •



قال : اللهم إذ حُتَّتِي قَتَمَ ، قال : فقبض المجنون بكنا يديه قبضتين من الجمر .  
فما فارقهما حتى سقط مضياً عليه ، وسقط الجمر مع لحم راحتيه ، وعَضَّ على شفته  
فقطعهما ، فقام زوج ليل مغموما بفعله مُتَعَجِّبا منه فمضى .

غُثِّي في البيتين المذكورين في هذا الخبر الحسين بن محرز ، ولحقه رَمَلٌ بالوسطى  
عن المشامي .

أخبرني أحمد بن عبد العزيز وحبيب بن نصر المُنْهَلِيّ : قالوا : حدثنا عمر بن شبة  
قال قال محمد بن الحكم عن عوانة : إنه حدثه وواقفه ابن نصر وابن حبيب قالوا :  
إن أهل المجنون خرجوا به معهم إلى وادي القرى قبل توحشه ليمتاروا خوفاً عليه  
[من] أن يضيع أو يهلك ، فمروا في طريقهم بجبل نمان ، فقال له بعض قتيان الحى :  
هذان جبلا نمان ، وقد كانت ليل تترلُ بهما . قال : فأى الرياح يأتي من ناحيتهما ؟  
قالوا : الصبا ، قال : فوالله لا أرى هذا الموضع حتى تهب الصبا ، فأقام ومَضَوْا  
فامتاروا لأنفسهم ، ثم اتوا عليه فأقاموا معه ثلاثة أيام حتى جبت الصبا . ثم انطلق  
معهما فأتنا يقول :

مروره بجبل نمان  
ومكة نيسا إلى  
هيوب الصبا  
وما قاله في ذلك  
من الشعر

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ٥١٤٢ : « خفيف » .

(٢) وادي القرى : وادي بين الشام والمدينة كانت به قرى مشهورة ، وبها حتى وادي القرى . قال ياقوت :  
وأما القرى إلى الآن بيا ظاهرة إلا أنها في وقتنا هذا كلها خراب وبها جارية تدفق ضائعة لا ينفذ بها  
أحد . أنظر معجم ياقوت في كلمة القرى . (٣) من الاخبار وهو حطب الطعام للبع وغيره .  
(٤) زيادة في ش ، ح . (٥) هو نمان الأراك وهو وادي بين مكة والطائف . وقيل وادي لهديل  
على لبنتين من عرقات . (٦) لا أرى : لا أرح . وفي ش : « لا أرى من هذا الموضع »  
وكلاهما صحيح .

## صوت

أَبَا جَيْلٍ تَعَانِ بِاللهِ حَلْبًا • سَبِيلُ الصَّبَا يَخْضُ إِلَى تَسِيمِهَا<sup>(١)</sup>  
 أَجْدُ بَرْدَهَا أَوْ تَشِفُ مِنِّي حَرَارَةً • عَلَى كَيْدٍ لَمْ يَبْقَ إِلَّا صَمِيمُهَا<sup>(٢)</sup>  
 فَانَّ الصَّبَا رِيحٌ إِذَا مَا تَنَسَّمَتْ • عَلَى نَقِيسٍ عَزُوزٍ نَجَلَتْ هُمُومُهَا<sup>(٣)</sup>

أخبرني علي بن سليمان الأخفش قال حدثني محمد بن الحسين بن الحرور قال  
 حدثني الكسروي عن جماعة من الرواة قاله :<sup>(٤)</sup>  
 أو محال أصله  
 عن مازلم وما قاله  
 في ذلك من الشعر

لَمَّا مَنَعَ أَبُو لَيْلٍ الْمُجَنُونَ وَعَشِيرَتُهُ مِنْ تَرْوِيحِهِ بِهَا، كَانَ لَا يَزَالُ يَغْتَنِي بِيَوْمِهِمْ  
 وَيَهْجُمُ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَشَكَّوهُ إِلَى السُّلْطَانِ فَأَهْدَرَ دَمَهُ لَمْ، فَأُخْبِرُوهُ بِذَلِكَ فَلَمْ يَرَعُهُ وَقَالَ :  
 الْمَوْتُ أَزْوَاجٌ لِي فَلَيْتَهُمْ قَتَلُونِي ، فَلَمَّا عَلِمُوا بِذَلِكَ وَعَرَفُوا أَنَّهُ لَا يَزَالُ يَطْلُبُ غِرَّةَ<sup>(٥)</sup>  
 مِنْهُمْ حَتَّى إِذَا تَفَرَّقُوا دَخَلَ دُورَهُمْ ، فَارْتَحَلُوا عَنْهَا وَأَبْعَدُوا ، وَجَاءَ الْمُجَنُونَ عَشِيَّةً فَأَشْرَفَ  
 عَلَى دُورِهِمْ فَإِذَا هِيَ مِنْهُمْ يَلْقَعُ<sup>(٦)</sup> ، فَقَصَدَ مَتَلًى لَيْلٍ الَّذِي كَانَ يَتَّبِعُهَا فِيهِ ، فَالْصَقَ  
 صَدْرَهُ بِهِ وَجَعَلَ يُمَرِّغُ خَدْيَهُ عَلَى تَرَابِهِ [وَيْسِكِي] ، ثُمَّ أَتَانَا يَقُولُ . — وَذَكَرَ هَذِهِ  
 الْأَبْيَاتَ ابْنُ حَيِّبٍ وَأَبُو نَصْرٍ لَهُ [بَغِيرَ خَبَرٍ] —<sup>(٧)</sup>

- (١) كذا في ش وترين الأسواق في ترجمة المجنون ص ٧٢ ضع يولاق . وفي سائر النسخ :  
 « نسيم الصبا » . (٢) صميمها : أصلها . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ والديوان .  
 وفي ش ، ح وترين الأسواق : « مهموم » .  
 (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش ، ح : « الحسن » . (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ  
 وفي ح : « الكودسي » . (٦) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : « قالوا » .  
 (٧) في ش : « أرواح إلى » . (٨) غرة : غلة . (٩) يلقع : خوال ،  
 والواحد يلقع . (١٠) زيادة في ش . (١١) زيادة في م ، ٤ ، ١ ، ٥ .

أَبَا حَرْجَاتٍ الْحَيَّ جِثَّ تَحْمَلُوا ٥ يَذِي سَلِمَ لَا جَادُكُنَّ رَبِيعُ<sup>(١)</sup>  
 وَخَيَاتُكَ اللَّاتِي بِمُنْتَرَجِ اللَّوَى ٥ يَلِينُ إِلَى لَمْ تَبْلَهَنَّ رُبُوعُ<sup>(٢)</sup>  
 نَدِمْتُ عَلَى مَا كَانَ مِنِّي نَدَامَةً ٥ كَمَا يَنْدِمُ الْمَغْبُونُ حِينَ يَبِيعُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
 فَقَدْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ شَعَاعٍ فَاتَنَى ٥ نَحْبُكَ عَنْ هَذَا وَأَنْتِ جَمِيعُ<sup>(٤)</sup>  
 قَتَرْتَنِي غَيْرَ الْقَرِيبِ وَأَشْرَفْتُ ٥ إِلَيْكَ شَابَا مَا لَمْ تَطْلُوعُ<sup>(٥)</sup>

وذكر خاله بن جميل وخاله بن كلثوم في أخبارهما التي صنعها أن ليلي وعدته  
 قبل أن يختلط أن تستريحه ليلة إذا وجدت فرصة لذلك، فكث مرة يرأسها  
 في الوفاء وهي تبعه وتؤفقه، فأتى أهلها ذات يوم والى خلوف، بغلس إلى نسوة  
 من أهلها حجوة منها بحيث نسمع كلامه، فحاشن طويلا ثم قال : ألا أنشدكن  
 أبياتا أحدثها في هذه الأيام؟ قلن : بلى، فأنشدن :

- (١) الحرجات : جمع حرجة وهي النبعة، وصحبت بذلك لضيقها، وقيل : الشجر الملتف، وهي أيضا  
 الشجرة تكون بين الأشجار لا تصل إليها الآكلة وهي ما رمى من المال . (٢) كذا في ش .  
 وفي سائر النسخ : «حين» . (٣) ذوسلم : موضع بالجواز . (٤) يقال : قس شعاع  
 إذا انتشر رأيا فلم ينجح لأمر جزم . (٥) الجميع : ضد المخرق . (٦) كذا في ش ، ه ، م  
 وديوان المجنون والأغانى في ترجمة قيس بن ذريح ج ٨ طبع بولاق . وفي سائر الأصول : «فاشرفت»  
 بالقاء. ومناه ظهرت وارتفعت . (٧) التنايا : جمع تقة وهي التفة وهي المرقى الصعب في الجبل  
 يريد بذلك أن الوصول إلى ليلي صعب لا يستطيعه . (٨) ستاتي هذه الأبيات في قصيدة  
 منسوبة إلى قيس بن ذريح في ترجمته بالجزء الثامن من الأغانى طبع بولاق . (٩) كذا في أغلب  
 النسخ . وفي ش : «خاله بن حل» بالخاء. ولم فوق تصحيح هذا الاسم . (١٠) كذا  
 في أغلب النسخ . وفي س : «أن تردوه» . (١١) مأخوذ من كلمة سوف، كان  
 المماطل يقول مرة بعد مرة سوف أقبل . (١٢) يقال : س خلوف إذا غاب الرجال  
 ونقام النساء . (١٣) حجرة : تاجية .

حديثه مع نسوة  
 فحين ليلي

## صوت

يا للرجال لِمَ باتَ بعروني • مُتَطَرِّفٌ<sup>(١)</sup> وَقَدِيمٌ كَادُ يُبْلِي  
 مَنْ عَاذِرِي مِنْ غَرِيمٍ غَيْرِ ذِي عُسْرِ<sup>(٢)</sup> • يَا بِي فِيمَطَّلِي<sup>(٣)</sup> دِينِي وَيَسْلُوْنِي  
 لَا يُبْعِدُ الْقَدَّ مِنْ حَقِّي فَيَكْرَهُ • وَلَا يُحْدِثُنِي أَنْ سَوْفَ يَقْضِيْنِي<sup>(٤)</sup>  
 وَمَا كُشِّرِي شَكْرًا لَوْ يُوَافِقُنِي • وَلَا مُنَايَ سِوَاهُ لَوْ يُوَافِقُنِي<sup>(٥)</sup>  
 أَطْلَعْتُ وَعَصَبْتُ النَّاسَ كُلَّهُمْ • فِي أَمْرِهِ وَهَوَاهُ وَهُوَ يَقْضِيْنِي

(٥) قال : فقل له : ما أنصفك هذا الغريم الذي ذكرته ! وجعلن يتضاحكُن وهو يكي ، فاستجبت ليل منهن ورفق له حتى بكى ، وقامت فدخلت بيتها وانصرف هو .

- في الثلاثة الأبيات الأول من هذه الأبيات هزج طنبوري - لستود - قالوا في خبرهما هذا : وكان للجنون أبنا عم ياتيه فيحدثانه ويسلّانه ويؤانسانه ، فوقف عليهما يوما ومسا جالسان ، فقالا له : يا أبا المهدى - ألا تجلس ؟ قال : لا ، بل أمضي إلى منزل ليلى فأتزحمه وأرى آثارها فيه ، فأشفي بعض ما في صدي بها ، فقالا له : فنحن معك ، فقال : إذا فعلنا أكرمنا وأحسنا ، فقاما معه حتى أتى دار ليلى ، فوقف بها طويلا يتبع آثارها ويكي ويتف في موضع موضع منها ويكي ، ثم قال :

- (١) كذا في أكثر النسخ . وفي ح : « منظره وقد بدا كأن يكي » . (٢) السر : لفظة في المراجعة البسر . قال عيسى بن علي : كل اسم على ثلاثة أحرف يؤنه معصوم وأوسطه ساكن فن العرب من ينقله ومنهم من يخففه مثل عسر وعسر وحمل وحمل . أنظر اللسان مادة عسر .  
 (٣) في أ ، ب ، س : « يا بِي » وهو تحريف . (٤) في ت ، ح : « يواتيني » .  
 (٥) كذا في جميع النسخ ، ونصه : « قال » . بالتنبيه لأن الخبر مرر عن خاله بن جيسل وخاله ابن كلثوم .

## صوت

يا صاحبي ألياً بي بسترته • قد مرّ حين عليها أيتها حين  
 إني أرى رجعات الحب تقتلني<sup>(١)</sup> • وكان في بدنها ما كان يكفيني<sup>(٢)</sup>  
 لا خبر في الحب ليست فيه قارعة • كأن صاحبها في تزج موتون<sup>(٣)</sup>  
 إن قال عدّاله مهلاً فلان لهم • قال الموى غير هذا القول بعيني<sup>(٤)</sup>  
 ألقى من البأس تاراً تفتلني<sup>(٥)</sup> • وللرجاء بشاشات تُحيني<sup>(٦)</sup>  
 الفناء لإبراهيم خفيف ثقيل من جامع غنايه<sup>(٧)</sup> .

وقال هشام بن الكلبي عن أبي مسكين: إن جماعة من بني عامر حدّثوه قالوا:  
 كان رجل من بني عامر بن عُقيل يقال له: قيس بن مُعاذ، وكان يدعى المجنون،  
 وكان صاحب غزير وبجالسة للنساء، فنفرج على ناقة له يسيراً، فترى امرأة من بني عُقيل  
 يقال لها: كريمة، وكانت جميلة عاقلة، معها نسوة يعرفنه ودعوته إلى الترويل  
 والحديث، وعليه حلّاتين له فاحترنان وطيلسان وقلنسوة، فترى فقلّ يحلّسهن  
 ويُشدهن ومن أعجب شيء به فيما يرى، فلما أعجبه ذلك منهن عقرهن ناقته،

(١) في ش: «قاتلني». (٢) في ش: بين هذا البيت والذي بعده ما نص: «الموتون  
 مضروب على التوتين وهو عرق حقر يضاط القلب» ولا ندري هل هو من أصل الكتاب أم من المؤلف  
 نفسه أو من التواتر وجدته يماثل بعض النسخ فأخفقه بالأصل. وتفسير الموتون بالمضروب  
 على التوتين مطابق لقولهم في كتب النسخ: «أصاب وتنه: وظهيرة مكل إذا أصبت كلبه، ومكبود  
 إذا أصبت كبده». (٣) كذا في ش، ح. وفي باقي النسخ: «يفتنى» بالتثنية المعجمة.  
 (٤) كذا في كتاب الشعر والنسب في ترجمة المجنون طبع ليدن ص ٣٥٨ وفي سائر النسخ:  
 «من الحب». (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ: وفي م، س، أ: «لأن أمة». (٦)  
 كذا في ش، ح. وفي سائر النسخ: «ابن مسكين». وقد سبق في ص ٢٢ من هذا الجزء  
 باسم «ابن مسكين» باتفاق النسخ، ويبقى كذلك بالجزء الثالث عشر من الأغاني طبع بولاق ص ١٢٢

وَمَنْ إِلَيْهَا جَعَلَ يَسِيرِينَ وَيَا كُنْ بِنِي أَنْ تَمْسَى : فَوَقِيلَ غَلَامٌ شَابٌ حَسْبُ الْوَجْهِ  
مِنْ حَيْثُ بَغِلَسَ إِلَيْهِ ، فَوَقِيلَ عَلَيْهِ بِوُجُوهِهِ يَقُولُ لَهُ : كَيْفَ ظَلَمْتُ بِأُمَارِلُ  
الْيَوْمَ ؟ فَلَمَّا رَأَى ذَلِكَ مِنْ فَعْلِهِ غَضِبَ ، فَقَامَ وَتَرَكْتَهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ :

أَخْفِرُ مِنْ جَرًّا كَرِيمَةً نَاقِي . وَوَصَلِي مَقْرُوشٌ يُوْصِلُ مُنَارِلُ  
إِذَا جَاءَ قَعْقَعُ الْحُلِيِّ وَلَمْ أَكُنْ . إِذَا جُنْتُ أَرْضِي صَوْتَ تِلْكَ الْخِلَاحِلِ<sup>(٢)</sup>

قَالَ : فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّسَبِيُّ : هَلُمَّ تَتَصَارَعْ أَوْ تَتَنَاصَلْ ، فَقَالَ لَهُ : إِنْ شِئْتَ ذَلِكَ  
فَقُمْ إِلَى حَيْثُ لَا تَرَاهُنَّ وَلَا يَرِيَنَّكَ ، ثُمَّ مَا شِئْتَ فَافْعَلْ ، وَقَالَ :  
إِذَا مَا اتَّصَلْنَا فِي الْخِلَاءِ نَفَضْتُهُ \* وَإِنْ يَرِمَ رَشَقًا عِنْدَهَا فَهِيَ نَاضِلِ<sup>(٣)</sup>

وَقَالَ ابْنُ الْكَلْبِيِّ فِي هَذَا الْخَبَرِ : فَلَمَّا أَصْبَحَ لَيْسَ حُلَّتُهُ وَرِكَبَ نَاقَتَهُ وَمَضَى  
مُتَفَرِّضًا لَهَا ، فَأَلْفَى لَيْلَى جَالِسَةً بِفَاءِ بَيْتِهَا . وَكَانَتْ مَعَهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ جَانِسَةٌ ، وَقَدْ عَلِقَ  
بِقَلْبِهَا وَهَوِيَّتَهُ ، وَعِنْدَهَا جُودِيَّاتٌ يُحَدِّثْنَهَا . فَوَقَفَ بِهِنَّ وَسَلَّم ، فَدَعَاؤُهُ إِلَى التَّرْوَلِ  
وَقُلْنَ لَهُ : حَلِّ لَكَ فِي مُحَادَثَةِ مَنْ لَا يَسْقُطُهُ عَنْكَ مُنَارِلُ وَلَا غَيْرُهُ ؟ قَالَ : إِي لَعْمَرِي ،  
فَتَرَلْ وَقَعَلْ فَعَلْتَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ ، فَأَرَادْتُ أَنْ تَعْلَمَ حَلِّ لَهَا عِنْدَهُ مِثْلُ مَا لَهُ عِنْدَهَا ، فَجَعَلْتُ

(١) كَذَا فِي أَغْطِ النَّسَبِ . وَفِي شَيْءٍ : « يَسِيرِينَ » وَكَلَامًا صَحِيحًا . (٢) فِي شَيْءٍ :  
« ظَلَمْتُ » وَهِيَ لَفَةٌ فِيهَا . (٣) جَاءَ هَذَا الشَّعْرُ فِي تَزْيِينِ الْأَسْوَاقِ ص ٦٣ صِغَ بَوْدَاقِ هَكَذَا :  
« إِذَا جُنْتُ بِلْ أَخْفِرِينَ صَوْتَ الْخِلَاحِلِ \* » وَقَالَ فِي تَمْسِيرِهِ : يَقُولُ قَدْ أَضْهَرْتُ صَوْتَ الْحُلِيِّ  
حِينَ جَاءَ مُنَارِلُ ، وَهَذِهِ تَحْذِيرٌ عَنْ قِيَامِهِ لَهُ ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ مَجِيئِهِ .

(٤) كَذَا فِي شَيْءٍ ، حَرْفُ تَزْيِينِ الْأَسْوَاقِ . وَفِي بَاقِي النَّسَبِ : « نَاضِلُ » بِغَيْرِ يَاءٍ اخْتِصَامًا ، وَأَثَرُهَا  
مَا أُثْبِتَ بِالْأَصْلِ لِأَنَّهُ أَمُّ مُقَابَلَةٍ لِقَوْلِهِ نَفَضْتُ ، وَلِأَنَّهُ قَوْلُهُ « نَفَضْتُ » هَكَذَا بِالضَّمِّ ظَاهِرٌ فِي أَنَّ النَّاسَ  
أَنَّى يَهْدُوا إِلَيْهِ فِي هَيْئَةِ الْخِصَالِ بِالْبَيْتَيْنِ السَّابِقَيْنِ وَهَذَا يَسْتَدْعِي كَرَارَ الْإِلَامِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ عَلَى رَوِيَّاتِهِمَا  
كَأَنَّ قَدَّمَ فِي صَهْفَةِ ١٣ مِنْ هَذَا الْجُزْءِ .

تُعْرِضُ عَنْ حَبِيبَةِ سَاعَةٍ بَعْدَ سَاعَةٍ وَتُحَدِّثُ غَيْرَهُ، وَقَدْ كَانَ عَلَّقَ حَبِيبًا بِقَلْبِهِ وَشَفَقَهُ<sup>(١)</sup>  
وَأَسْتَحْيَبَ . فَبَيْنَا هِيَ تُحَدِّثُهُ إِذْ أَقْبَلَ نَتَّى مِنْ الْخِي - فَدَعَتْهُ فَنَارَتْهُ سَرَارًا طَوِيلًا ثُمَّ  
قَالَتْ لَهُ أَنْصَرِفْ ، فَانْصَرَفَ ، وَنَظَرَتْ إِلَى وَجْهِ الْمَجْنُونِ قَدْ تَغَيَّرَ وَانْتَقَعَ<sup>(٢)</sup> وَشَقَّ عَلَيْهِ  
مَا فَعَلَتْ ، فَانْتَأَتْ تَقُولُ :

كَلَامًا مُظْهِرًا لِلنَّاسِ بُغْضًا • وَكُلُّ عِنْدَ صَاحِبِهِ مَكِينُ  
تَبَلَّغْنَا الْعَبِيرُ مَقَالَتِنَا • وَفِي الْقَلْبَيْنِ ثُمَّ هَوَى دَفِينُ

[ قَدْ نَسَبَ هَذَا الشَّعْرَ مُتَقَدِّمًا ] فَلَمَّا سَمِعَ هَذَيْنِ الْبَيْتَيْنِ شَبَقَ شَبَقَةً عَظِيمَةً<sup>(٣)</sup>  
وَأَغْمَى عَلَيْهِ فَكَتَبَ [ كَذَلِكَ ] سَاعَةً ، وَنَضَحُوا الْمَاءَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى أَفَاقَ ، وَتَمَكَّنَ  
حَبْ كُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا فِي قَلْبِ صَاحِبِهِ وَبَلَغَ مِنْهُ كُلُّ مَيْتَعٍ .

حَدَّثَنِي عَمِّي عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي سَعْدٍ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ الْقُرَشِيِّ  
قَالَ حَسَنًا أَبُو الْعَالِيَةِ عَنْ أَبِي ثُمَامَةَ الْجَعْفَرِيِّ قَالَ :  
لَا يَعْرِفُ بَيْنَا مَجْنُونٌ إِلَّا قَيْسُ بْنُ الْمُلُوحِ .

قَالَ : وَحَدَّثَنِي بَعْضُ الْمَشِيرَةِ قَالَ : قُلْتُ لِقَيْسِ بْنِ الْمُلُوحِ قَبْلَ أَنْ  
يُخَالَطَ : مَا أَعْجَبُ شَيْءًا أَصَابَكَ فِي وَجْهِكَ بَيْلَى ؟ قَالَ : طَرَقْنَا ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ  
أَصْبَحْتُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ عِنْدَنَا لَمْ أَدْمُ ، فَبَعَثَنِي أَبِي إِلَى مَتَرٍ أَبِي لَيْلَى وَقَالَ لِي : اطْلُبْ  
[ لَنَا ] مِنْهُ أَدَمًا ، فَاتَّبَعْتُهُ فَوَقَفْتُ عَلَى خِيَابَانِهِ فَنَصَحْتُ بِهِ ، فَقَالَ : مَا تَنَاء ؟<sup>(٤)</sup>

(١) فِي ت : د . وَشَفَقَهُ . (٢) كَذَا فِي أَطْلَحَ تَحَسُّعَ وَفِي ب ، ص :  
« انْتَقَعَ » وَانْتَقَعَ وَانْتَقَعَ بِمَعْنَى وَاحِدٍ وَهُوَ أَنْ يَتَغَيَّرَ مِنْ حِينَ أَوْفَرَ ، قَالَ صَاحِبُ السَّانِ  
فِي مَادَّةِ تَقَعَ : وَانْتَقَعَ بِالْمِيمِ أَجُودُ . (٣) زِيَادَةٌ فِي ت . (٤) كَذَا فِي ت ، ح .  
وَفِي سَائِرِ تَحَسُّعَ : « طَرَقْنَا » بِأَنَّهُ وَكَلَامُهُمَا جَائِزٌ لِأَنَّ الْفَعْلَ سَتَ إِلَى جَمْعِ تَكْبِيرٍ وَحَذْفِ التَّاءِ فِي مَثَلِ  
هَذَا أَجُودُ .

حديث اتصاله بيللى  
في صباه

فقلت : طَرَقْنَا ضِيقًا وَلَا أَدَمَ عِندَنَا لَمْ قَارَسَتْنِي نَبِي تَصُبُّ مَتَّ أَدَمًا ، فقال :  
يا ليلي ، أخرجني إليه ذاك النَحْيُ<sup>(١)</sup> ، فأمشي له إناؤه من السمن . فأخرجته ومعي  
قَمْبٌ<sup>(٢)</sup> ، فجعلت تَصُبُّ السمن فيه وتَحَدَّثُ<sup>(٣)</sup> ، فألهانا الحديث وهي تَصُبُّ السمن  
وقد امتلأ القَمْبُ ولا نعلم جميعًا ، وهو يسيلُ حتى استنقعت أرجلنا في السمن ، قال :  
فأيتهم ليلة ثانية أطلبُ نارا ، وأنا متوقعٌ يردُّ لي ، فأخرجت لي نارا في عَصِيَّةٍ فأعطيتها  
ووقفنا نتحدَّثُ ، فلما احترقت العَصِيَّةُ حَرَقْتُ<sup>(٤)</sup> من بُرْدِي خِرْقَةً وجعلت النار فيها ،  
فكلما احترقت حَرَقْتُ<sup>(٥)</sup> أخرى وأذكيتُ بها النار حتى لم يبق علي من البرد إلا ما وارى  
عورتى ، وما أعقل ما أصنع ، وأنشدنى :

أُسْتَقِيلُ نَفْعَ الصَّبَا ثم شائقي • يَرِدُ شَايَا ثُمَّ حَسَانَ شَائِقِي  
كَأَنَّ عَلَى أَنْيَابِهَا الْخَمْرَ تَجَبَّهَا • بماء الندى من آخِرِ اللَّيْلِ عَائِقِي<sup>(٦)</sup>  
وَمَا شِئْتَهُ إِلَّا بِعَيْنِي تَفَرُّسًا • كما شِئِمَ فِي أَعْلَى السَّعَابَةِ بَارِقِي<sup>(٧)</sup>  
ومن الناس من يروى هذه الأبيات لتُصَيِّبَ ، ولكن هكذا روى في [هذا] الخبر .<sup>(٨)</sup>

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : «أطلب» . (٢) النحر عنه لعرب : الزرق  
الذي يوضع فيه السمن خاصة . (٣) القمب : القدح المصنوع من الخشب . وفيه من خشب  
مقر . (٤) كذا في ش . وفي سائر النسخ : «فأمر بالحديث» . (٥) العَصِيَّة :  
خِرْقَةٌ تُوَضَعُ فِي النَّارِ . قال الكلب :

نارا من الحرب لا يلمخ فيها • قدح الأكف وه تَضَعُ فِيهَا الْعَصَب  
ويقال : «أجد ربح عَصِيَّة» أي قنعة أو خِرْقَةٌ مَحْرَقَةٌ . (٦) كذا في ش . وفي باقي النسخ :  
«فلما احترقت» . (٧) عَجَبًا : مزجها . (٨) العائِق : البكر التي لم تَبْنِ عن  
أهلها . ويحتمل أن تكون كلمة «عائِق» محوطة عن «عائِق» وهو الساق في العروق أي المشى .  
(٩) كذا في ش . وفي باقي النسخ : «ذوقه» وشبه من شيم وهو النظر في نحو النار والسحاب  
والبرق . يقال شام السحاب والبرق شيئا أي نظرائه أين يقصده وأين يحضر . (١٠) زيادة عن ش .



أخبرنا محمد بن خلف وكيع عن عبد الملك بن محمد الرقاشي<sup>(١)</sup> عن عبد الصمد  
ابن المعتل قال :  
حدث الأعمى أنه لم يكن مجنوناً  
وروى من شعره

سمعت الأعمى يقول - و [قد] ثنا كنا مجنون بن عامر - قال : هو قيس  
ابن معاذ العجلي ، ثم قال : لم يكن مجنوناً إنما كانت به لؤنة ، وهو القائل :  
أخذت عاصن كل ما • ضنت عاصه بحينه  
كاد النزال يكونها • لولا الشوى وتؤز قرينه  
قال : وهو القائل :

### [صوت<sup>(٢)</sup>]

ولم أر ليل بعد موقف ساعية • بخيف مني زربي حمار المحصب  
ويدي ألقى منها إذا قدفت به • من البرد أطراف البتان المخضب  
فأصبحت من ليل الغداة كاظرة • مع الصبح في أعقاب نجم مغرب  
ألا إنما غادرت يا أم مالك • صدى أبحا تلعب به الريح بدعب  
في هذه الأبيات حُسن من الثقل الأول . ابتدأه تشبُّه من صفة الوانق وهو  
المشهور . وذكره ابن المكي لأبيه يحيى . وهو في جامع غناء سليم بن سلام له .  
وذكره حبش في موضعين من كتابه فنسبه في طريقة الثقل الأول في أحدهما إلى  
ابن محرز ، والآخر إلى يحيى المكي . وزعم المشايخ أن فيه لسلم بن سلام لحنا آخر  
من الثقل الأول .

(١) كذا في ش . وفي سائر الأصول « القريش » وما أثبتناه هو العراب وانظر الحاشية رقم ١  
ص ٦ من هذا الجزء . (٢) زيادة في ش . (٣) كذا في ش سليم بن سلام  
بضم السين في الأزل وفتح اللام المخففة في الثاني ولم تقف على ضبطه في غير هذه النسخة . وفي سائر النسخ  
« سليمان بن سلام » وهو تحريف إذا المعنى هو سليم بن سلام ، وسأنا له ترجمة مشقة في ج ٦ من الأغاني  
ضبع بولاق .

أخبرنا الحسن بن علي قال حدثنا أحمد بن عبد الجبار الصوفي قال حدثني إبراهيم بن سعد الزهرري قال : أتاني رجل من عُذرة حاجة ، بخرى ذكر العشق والعشاق ، فقلت له : أتم أرق قلوباً أم بنو عامر ؟ قال : إنا لأرق الناس قلوباً ، ولكن غلبنا بنو عامر يحنونها .

ن. من أوصافه  
أخبرني أحمد بن عمر بن موسى بن زكويه القفطان إجازة قال حدثنا إبراهيم بن المنذر الحزامي قال أخبرني عبد الجبار بن سليمان بن نوفل بن مساحق عن أبيه عن جده قال : أنا رأيت مجنون بن عامر ، وكان جميل الوجه أبيض اللون قد علاه محبوب<sup>(٣)</sup> ، واستشده فاستدنى قصيدته التي يقول فيها :

تذكرت ليلى والسنين الخوالي \* وأيام لا أعدي على اللهو عاديًا<sup>(٤)</sup>

أخبرني محمد بن الحسن الكندي خطيب مسجد القادسية قال حدثنا الرياشي قال : سمعت أبا عثمان المازني يقول : سمعت معاذًا وبشر بن المقضل جميعًا يشندان هذين البيتين وينسبانهما لمجنون بن عامر :

طمعت بليل أن تريع<sup>(٦)</sup> وإنما \* تقطع<sup>(٧)</sup> أحناق الرجال المطامع<sup>(٨)</sup>  
وداينت ليلى في خلأ ولم يكن - شهود على ليلى عدول مقانيع<sup>(٨)</sup>

- (١) كذا في ت . وفي أغلب النسخ : « الحسين » وقد تقدم مراراً « الحسن بن علي » باتفاق الأصول .  
(٢) كذا وقع هذا الاسم في جميع الأصول : وه وقف له على ضبط بيته .  
(٣) يقال : شيب لونه يشعب شحوباً إذا تغير لونه مرض أو سفرو ونحوه . (٤) لا أعدي : لا أعين ولا أنصر .  
(٥) كذا في ت . وفي سائر النسخ : « على الدهر » . وقد جاء هذا الشطر في الديوان هكذا : « وأيام لا نخشى على اللهو ناهب »  
(٦) يقال : راع الشيء يريع ريعاً أي رجع وعاد . (٧) كذا في جميع الأصول . ورواية اللسان في مادة ريع : « تُضْرِبُ » . (٨) جمع قطع فتح اسم وهو العهد من الشهود يقال : فلان شاهد قطع أي رضا بقطع به .

وحدثني محمد بن يحيى الصوفي قال حدثنا أبو خليفة [الفضل بن الحباب<sup>(١)</sup>] عن ابن سلام قال : قضى عبيد الله بن الحسن بن الحسين بن أبي الحر العنبري<sup>(٢)</sup> على رجل من قومه قضية أوجبها الحكم عليه ، وضمن العنبري أنه تحامل عليه وأنصرف مضطرباً ، ثم نفيه في طريق ، فخذ بلجام بعنقه وكان شديداً أيداً ، ثم قال له : يا عبيد الله !

طيمت ليل أن تربع وإنيما . . . تقطع أعناق الرجل المطامع<sup>(٣)</sup>  
 فقال عبيد الله :

وباعت ليل في خلاء ولم يكن . . . شهود عدول عند ليل مقانيع<sup>(٤)</sup>

خلى عن البغلة . قال الصوفي في خبره هذا : واليتان للبيت هكذا ، قال : فلا أدري أمن قوله هو أم حكاية عن أبي خليفة ! .

أخبرنا محمد بن التمام الأنباري عن عبد الله بن حنظل الدلال قال حدثنا زكريا<sup>(٥)</sup> ابن موسى عن شعيب بن السكين عن يونس النحوي قال :

لما أخطأ عقل قيس بن الملوح وترك الطعام والشراب ، مضت أمه إلى ليل فقالت لها : إن قيساً قد ذهب حُبك بعقله ، وترك الطعام والشراب ، فلو جئته وقتاً رجوت أن ينوب إليه [بعض] عقله ، فقالت ليل : أما نهاراً فلا [لأنني لا]

(١) زيادة في . . . (٢) كذا في . . . وفي سائر الأصول : «عبد الله» والصحيح ما أنبأناه عنه عبد الله بن الحسن بن حسين العنبري قاضي البصرة . انظر كتاب تهذيب التهذيب والخلصة في أسماء الرجال . (٣) كذا في تهذيب التهذيب وتهذيب التلخيص والخلصة في أسماء الرجال . وفي جميع الأصول : «ابن الحر» . (٤) أيداً : قويا . (٥) كذا في . . . وفي باقي النسخ «يا أبا عبد الله» . (٦) استشهد صاحب السان في مادة «ربع» بالبيت الأول ونسبه للبيت . (٧) زيادة في . . .

أَمِنْ قَوْمِي عَلَى نَفْسِي وَلَكِنْ لَيْلًا ، فَأَنْتَ لَيْلًا قَتَلْتَ لَه : يَا قَيْسُ ، إِنَّ أَمَلَكَ تَزِيحُ  
أَنْتَ جُنْتَ مِنْ أَجْلِ وَتَرَكْتَ الْمَضْمَ وَالْمَشْرَبَ ، فَتَقِ اللَّهَ وَأَتَّقِ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ ، فَبَكَ  
وَأَتْنَا يَقُول :

قَالَتْ جُنْتَ عَلَى أَيْشٍ قَلْتُ لَهَا • الْحُبُّ أَعْظَمُ مَا بِالْمَجَانِينِ  
الْحُبُّ لَيْسَ يُفِيقُ الدَّهْرَ صَاحِبَهُ • وَإِنَّمَا يُصْرَعُ الْمَجْنُونُ فِي الْحَيْنِ  
قَالَ : فَبَكَتْ مَعَهُ ، وَتَحَدَّثَا حَتَّى كَادَ الصَّبْحُ أَنْ يُسْفِرَ ، ثُمَّ وَدَّعْنَاهُ وَانْصَرَفَتْ ،  
فَكَانَ آخِرَ عَهْدِهِ بِهَا .

سبب جنونه بيت  
شعر قاله

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو الْمَرْزُوبَانِ قَالَ قَالَ الْقَعْدَمِيُّ : لَمَّا قَالَ الْمَجْنُونُ :  
فَضَاهَا لَغَيْرِي وَأَبْتَلَانِي بِجَبَّهَا • فَهَلَّا بَشِيءٌ غَيْرَ لَيْلٍ أَبْتَلَانِيَا  
سَلَبَ عَقْلَهُ • الْفَنَاءُ لِحَكَمٍ ثَقِيلٍ أَوَّلُ ، وَقِيلَ إِنَّهُ لَا بَيْنَ الْهَرِيدِ (٢) . وَفِيهِ لَشَيْمٌ خَفِيفٌ  
ثَقِيلٍ أَوَّلُ مِنْ جَامِعِ أَغَانِيهَا . وَحَدَّثَنِي بِحَفْظِهِ هَذَا الْخَبَرُ عَنْ مَيْمُونِ بْنِ هَارُونَ أَنَّهُ  
بَلَغَهُ أَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَالَ هَذَا الْبَيْتَ بَرَّصَ .

(١) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخ . وَقَدْ ذَكَرَ الشُّجَابُ اخْتِفَاجِي فِي « شِفَاءِ الْغَلِيلِ » أَنَّهَا عَقْفَةٌ مِنْ أَيْ شَيْءٍ .  
وَقَدْ قِيلَ إِنَّهَا صَحَّتْ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ وَإِنَّمَا وَرَدَتْ فِي شِعْرِ قَدِيمٍ ، كَمَا قِيلَ إِنَّهَا مَوْلُودَةٌ . ثُمَّ قَالَ : وَقَوْلُ الشَّرِيفِ  
فِي حَوَاشِي الرِّضَى : إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ مُسْتَعْلَمَةٌ بِمَعْنَى أَيْ شَيْءٍ . وَلَيْسَتْ عَقْفَةٌ مِمَّا لَا يَسِيءُ شَيْءٌ ، وَتَخْفِيفُهَا مِنْ  
أَيْ شَيْءٍ . كَمَا يُقَالُ : وَبَلَّغَهُ فِي مَعْنَى رَيْلٍ لِأَنَّهُ لِكَلِمَةِ الْإِسْتِمَالِ . وَفِي « عَلَى رَأْسِي » . وَكَذَلِكَ  
وَرَدَ فِي كِتَابِ تَرْجِيمِ الْأَسْوَأِ لِمَا وَرَدَ الْأَنْطَاكِيُّ ، فَتَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي سَوْقِ الْحِكَايَةِ : « بَسَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ قَالَتْ لَهُ :  
أَخْبَرْتُ أَنَّكَ مِنْ أَجْلِ جُنْتَ وَقَدْ » فَأَرَفَتْ أَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ تَعَيَّرَ وَلَمْ يُفِيقْ  
فَرَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ إِلَيْهَا وَأَقْبَضَ : « قَالَتْ جُنْتَ عَلَى رَأْسِي قَلْتُ لَهَا » . أَخ »

(٢) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخ . وَفِي ب ، س « ابْنُ الْخَزِيرِ » . وَهُوَ تَحْرِيفٌ أَنْظَرَ الْهَاشِيَةِ رَقْمَ ٣  
ص ٣٦١ مِنَ الْجُزْءِ الْأَوَّلِ مِنْ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ . (٣) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخ وَفِي ١ ،  
ب ، س « أَغَانِيهِ » وَهُوَ تَحْرِيفٌ إِذْ هِيَ مِنْهُمُ الْهَاشِيَةُ . أَنْظَرَ تَرْجُمَةً مُسْتَفْتَةً بِالْجُزْءِ الثَّانِعِ مِنْ  
هَذَا الْكِتَابِ طَبْعَ بُولاق .

أخبرني الحسن بن علي<sup>(١)</sup> [قال حدثنا محمد بن طاهر] القزويني عن ابن عائشة  
قال : إنما سُمي المجنون بقوله :

سببه  
المجنون واختلاف  
الرواة في ذلك

ما بال قلبك يا مجنون قد خُلِمَا • في حبٍّ من لا ترى في نيله طمعا  
الحُبُّ والودُّ نيطا بالفساد لما • فاصبعا في فؤادي ثابتين معا  
حدثنا وكيع عن ابن يونس قال قال الأصمعي : لم يكن المجنون مجنونا، إنما  
جنته العشق، وأنشد له :

يُسَوِّي المجنون حين يروني • تمزجني من ليل الغداة جنون  
لَيْلِي يزقي بي شَبَابٌ وَشَرَّةٌ • وإذني من خَفِضِ المبيشة لين<sup>(٢)</sup>

أخبرني محمد بن المَرْزُبَان عن إسحاق بن محمد بن أَبَانَ قال حدثني علي بن  
سَهْل عن المدائني : أنه ذكر عنده مجنون بن عامر فقال : لم يكن مجنونا، وإنما قيل  
له المجنون بقوله :

وإني لمجنونٌ لَيْلِي مُوَكَّلٌ • ولستُ عَزُوقًا عن هواها ولا جَلَّتَا  
إذا دُرِكتْ لَيْلِي بِكِتْ سَبَابَةٌ • نَشَتْ كَارِهَا حَتَّى يَلَّ الْبَكَاءُ الْخَدَا

أخبرني عمر بن جميل العنكي قال حدثنا عمر بن شبة قال حدثنا عون بن عبد الله  
العامري أنه قال : ما كان والله المجنون الذي تغزونه إلينا مجنونا، إنما كانت به  
لَوْنَةٌ وَسَبٌّ أَحَدُهُمَا بِهِ حُبٌّ لَيْلٍ، وأنشد له :

- (١) زيادة في ش : • (٢) في ش : • حدثنا وكيع قال حدثنا محمد بن يونس •  
(٣) في ش : « يزهاق شاب وشرة » أي يطيش في الشباب ويستغنى • (٤) كذا في ش ،  
ح • والشرة : حرص الشاب ونشاطه • وفي باقي النسخ : « شدة » والظاهر أنه تحريف •  
(٥) كذا في ش وكتاب تزيين الأسواق طبع بولاق ص ٨١ • وفي سائر الأصول : « من » وما أبتناه  
بالأصل هو الموافق لما في كتب اللغة من تعدي فعل عزف به ، يقال : عزف عن الشيء • عزوفا فهو عزوف  
أي انصرف عنه زهدا فيه أو كراهة له • (٦) في ش : « فيه » •

وبى من هوى ليل القدي لو أبته • جماعة أعدائي بكث في جوبها  
أرى النفس عن ليل أبت أن تطبني • قد جئت من وجدي بلي جوبها

أخبرني ابن المرزبان قال قال العنبي : إنما سمى المجنون بقوله :  
يقول أناس على مجنون عامر • يروم سؤلوا قلت أني لما يبا  
وقد لاني في حب ليل أقاربي • أني وابن عمي وابن خالي وخالي  
يقولون ليل أهل بيت عداوة • بنسي ليل من عدو ومالي  
ولو كان في ليل شدا من خصومة • لليت أعناق الميطي الملاويبا

أخبرني هاشم [بن محمد] الخراعي عن عيسى بن إسماعيل قال قال ابن سلام :  
لو حلفت أن مجنون بن عامر لم يكن مجنونا لصدقت ، ولكن توله لما زوجت ليل  
وأيقن اليأس منها ، ألم تسمع إلى قوله :

(١) في ش ، ح : « من وجد » منكرا بغيرياء الحكم . (٢) كذا في ش وديوانه  
وفي سائر الأصول « قراي » وما أقتناه أكثر في الاستعمال وأبعد عن الخلاف قال صاحب السان :  
تقول : بين وبينه قرابة وهو ذو قراي وهم أقرباء وأقارب . والمعجمة تقول : هو قراي ، ثم قال :  
ويقال : فلان ذو قراي وذو قرابة منى وذو مشربة ، ومنهم من يجيء « فلان قراي » واذنول أكثر ،  
وفي حديث عمر : « الإحامي على قرابته » أي أقاربه « سوا بالصدر كالصحابة » . (٣) كذا في أكثر  
النسخ بالهال المحجمة ومعناه الحس . وفي م : « شدا » بالهال المهملة وفسره ابن الأعرابي وابن  
خالويه باليقية وفسره غيرهما بإخذه وهما روايتان في البيت ، قال صاحب السان : وأنته الخزاء بالهال  
المهملة وأنته غيره بالهال المحجمة وأكثر الناس على الهال وهو الخذ . (٤) كذا في السان  
في المواد « شدا ، وشدا ، ولوى » . وفي جميع الأصول : « انحصوم » . (٥) الملاوي :  
جمع ملوى وهو مصدر مسمى من نوى بمعنى عطف . (٦) زيادة في ش : وقد تقدم ذكر  
هاشم هذا غير مرة منسوبا إلى أبيه محمد مكي أبي دلف . (٧) كذا في أغلب النسخ . يقال :  
توله أي أصابه الوله وهو ذهاب العقل من شدة الوجد وقندان أخيب . وفي ش ، ح : « توله »  
بالهال المهملة والتله أيضا : ذهاب العقل من عشق أو نحوه .

أَبَاوَيْحَ مِّنْ أَمْسَى مُخْتَلَسَ عَقْلِهِ . فَصَبَحَ مَذْهُوبًا بِهِ كُلِّ مَذْهَبٍ  
خَلِيعًا مِّنْ خُلْدٍ إِلَّا مُجَامِلًا<sup>(٢)</sup> . يُسَاعِدُنِي مَن كَانَ يَتَرَى تَجَنُّبِي  
إِذَا ذُكِرْتُ لَيْلِي عَقَلْتُ وَرَاجَعْتُ . عَوَازِبُ قَتْلِي مِّنْ قَسْوَى مُنْتَمِبٍ

[أخبرني به الحسن بن علي عن دينار بن عامر الثغلي عن مسعود بن سعد عن  
ابن سلام ونحوه .

أخبرني محمد بن خلف بن المرزبان قال أنشدني صالح بن سعيد قال أنشدني  
يعقوب بن السكت للجنون :  
بِسُوءَتِي الْمَجْنُونِ حِينَ يَرُونِي \* نَعَمْ بِي مِنْ لَيْلِ الْعِدَاءَةِ جُنُونُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
قال : وأنشدنا له أيضا :

### صوت

وُشِغِلْتُ عَنْ فِهْمِ الْحَدِيثِ سَوَى \* مَا كَانَتْ فِيكَ فَإِنَّهُ تُغْفَلِي<sup>(٤)</sup>  
وَأُدِيمُ حَقْظَ مُحَمَّدٍ لِسِرِّي \* أَنْ قَدْ نَفِثْتُ وَعِنْدَكُمْ عَقْلِي

أخبرني أبو المرزبان عن محمد بن الحسن بن دينار الأحمول عن علي بن المغيرة  
الأثرم عن أبي عبيدة :

الحدث عن تكتبه  
للإمام مالك

(١) كذا في أغلب الأصول وهو الخواطر لما في الديوان طبع يولاق . والخلع : الخلع أي المتزوع .  
رفي ت « خلعا » وهكذا ورد في جميع النسخ فيما تقدم ص ١٩ من هذا الجزء . (٢) كذا  
في جميع الأصول وقد تقدم في ص ١٩ من هذا الجزء في جميع الأصول « معذرا » . (٣) ما بين  
التوسين زيادة في ت . (٤) كذا في أغلب الأصول . وفي ت والديوان طبع يولاق :  
« وحكم شغل » .

أَنْ صَاحِبَةَ مَجْنُونٍ بَنَى عَامِرٌ لِّئَلَّا يَكْفَ بِهَا لَيْلٌ بَنَتْ مَهْدَى بْنُ سَعْدٍ مَهْدَى  
[بِنَ رَيْبَعَةَ] بِنَ الْحَرِيشِ، وَكُنِيَهَا أُمُّ مَالِكٍ، وَقَدْ ذَكَرَ هَذِهِ الْكُنْيَةَ الْمَجْنُونُ فِي شِعْرِهِ  
فَقَالَ :-

تَكَادُ يَلَادُ اللَّهُ يَا أُمُّ مَالِكٍ • بِمَا رُحِبَتْ يَوْمًا عَلَى تَضْيِيقُ

وَقَالَ أَيْضًا :

فَإِنَّ الَّذِي أَقْلَمْتُ مِنْ أُمِّ مَالِكٍ • أَشَابَ قَدْأَلِي وَأَسْتَهَامَ قُوَادِيَا<sup>(١)</sup>  
خَلِيلِي إِنْ دَارَتْ عَلَى أُمِّ مَالِكٍ • صُرُوفُ اللَّبَالِي قَائِيَا لِي طَعِيَا<sup>(٢)</sup>

وَقَالَ أَبُو عَمْرٍو الشَّيْبَانِيُّ : عَلَّقَ الْمَجْنُونُ لَيْلَى بَنَتْ مَهْدَى بْنُ سَعْدٍ مِنْ  
بَنَى الْحَرِيشِ، وَكُنِيَهَا أُمُّ مَالِكٍ، فَشَبَّهَا وَعَرَّفَ خَبْرَهُ فَحُجِبَتْ عَنْهُ، فَشَقَّ ذَلِكَ  
عَلَيْهِ فَطَعَلَهَا إِلَى أَبِيهَا فَوَدَّهَ وَأَبَى أَنْ يَرْفِقَ بِهَا، فَاشْتَدَّ بِهِ الْأَمْرُ حَتَّى جُنَّ وَفُتِلَ  
لَهُ : «مَجْنُونٌ بَنَى عَامِرٌ»، فَكَانَ عَلَى حَالِهِ يَجْلِسُ فِي نَادَى قَوْمِهِ فَلَا يَفْقَهُمْ مَا يُحَدِّثُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
بِهِ وَلَا يَحْفَظُهُ إِلَّا إِذَا ذُكِرَتْ لَيْلَى • وَأَشَدُّ لَهُ أَبُو عَمْرٍو :

### صوت

أَلَا مَا لِلْبَيْلَى لَا تُرَى عِنْدَ مَضْجَعِي • بَيْلَى وَلَا يَحْتَرَى بِذَلِكَ طَائِرُ  
بَيْلَى إِنْ عَجِمَ الطَّيْرُ تَحْتَرَى إِذَا جَرَتْ • بَيْلَى وَلَكِنْ لَيْسَ لِلطَّيْرِ زَاوِرُ  
أَزَالَتْ عَنِ الْمَهْدِ الَّذِي كَانَ بَيْنَنَا • بِذِي الْأَثَلِ أَمْ قَدْ غَيَّرْنَا الْمَقَادِرُ

نصبت الرائية

(١) زيادة في ت • (٢) القفال : جامع مؤخر الرأس • (٣) قايما :  
متاديا بموت • (٤) في ت : «حالة» • (٥) كذا في ت ، هـ وهو الموافق  
لقوله فيما تقدم في ص ١٧ من هذا الجزء : «فاذا أحبوا أن يتكلم أربوب ضله ذكروا له ليل» •  
وفي مآثر الأصول : «ولا يفتله أحد» وهذا لا يستقيم إلا أن يقرأ ما قبله هكذا «فلا يفهم ما يحدث  
به الخ» • (٦) في ت وفي ترتيب الأسواق ضع يوافق ص ٧٩ : «بني الأهلك» •



فوالله ما في القريب لي منك راحة . ولا البعد يُبليني ولا أنا صابر  
 ووالله ما أدري بأية جملة . وأنى مَرَامٍ أو خطارٍ <sup>(١)</sup> أخطرُ  
 وتالله إنَّ الدهر في ذات بيننا . عليّ لما في كلّ حالٍ لحائرُ  
 فلو كنت إذ أزممتَ هجري تركيتني . جمع القوى والعقلُ مِنِّي وانسرُ  
 ولكنَّ أياي يَحْتَلِ غُصْبَةٌ . وبالرَّضْمِ أبامُ جناها التجاورُ  
 وقد أصبح الودُّ الذي كان يتسا . أمانِيُ نَفسٍ والمؤمِّلُ حائرُ  
 لعمري لقد رَقِيتَ يا أُمَّ مالك . حياتي وساقتي إليك المقادرُ

قال أبو عمرو: وأخبرني بعض الشاميين قال: دخلتُ أرضَ بنِ عامرٍ، فالتُّ  
 عن المجنون الذي قتله الحبُّ، فخبروني عنه أنه كان عاشقاً لحارية منهم يقال لها  
 لبلى، رَبا معها ثم حُبَّتْ عنه، فاشتدَّ ذلك عليه وذهب عقله، فأتاه إخوانٌ من  
 إخوانه يلومونه على ما يفعلُ بنفسه، فقال:

### صوت

يا صاحبي أَلِمَّا بِي بِمَقْلَةٍ . قد مرَّ حينٌ عليها أيما حينٍ  
 في كلِّ منزلةٍ ديوانٌ مَعْرِفَةٍ . لم يبقِ باقيةً ذكرُ الدواوينِ  
 إني أرى رَجَعَاتِ الحبِّ تَقْطُلُنِي . وكان في بدنها ما كان يكفيني  
 الغناء لآلِ بنِ جامعٍ خفيفٍ ثقيلٍ .

(١) اخطار: مصدر خاطر بمعنى واهن . (٢) جمع: مجتمعات . (٣) الحقل: المرأة ويطلق على الموضع البكر الذي لم يزرع فيه قط . وغلبة: موضع بين البصرة ومكة .  
 والرَّضْم: موضع على ستة أميال من زُبالة، وزبالة: منزل مسرووف بطريق مكة من الكوفة .  
 (٤) رقت: كدبت، والترقيق كما يطلق على التكدير يطلق على منه الذي هو التعنبة . (٥) كذا في ت . ح . و في سائر الأصول: « صنع » .

أخبرني هاشم الخزازي عن [العباس بن الفرج] الرّياشي قال :

جنونه يبل وجهه  
عن وجهه من أجلها

ذكر العتي عن أبيه قال : كان المحنون في بدء أمره يرى ليلى ويألفها ويأنس  
بها ثم غيبت عن ناظره ، فكان أهله يعزونه عنها ويقولون : تزوجك أنفَس جارية  
في عَشيرتك ، فبأني إلا ليلى ويَهْدِي بها ويذكرها [ فكان ربما استراح إلى أمانهم  
وركن إلى قولهم ] ، وكان ربما حاج عليه الحزن والهم فلا يملك مَّا هو فيه أن ييم  
على وجهه ، وذلك قبل أن يتوحَّش مع البهائم في القفار ، فكان قومه يلومونه  
ويعدُّونه ، فأكثروا عليه في الملامة والعَدْل يوما فقال :

### صوت

يا للرجال لِمَ باتَ بِقُرُونِي \* مُتَطَرِّفٍ وَقَدِيمٍ كَانِ بَعِينِي<sup>(١)</sup>  
على غَيْرِمْ مَلَاءَ غَيْرِ ذِي عُدْمٍ \* بِأَنِّي فِيمَطَّئِي دَنِي وَيَلُونِي<sup>(٢)</sup>  
لا يذكُرُ البعضُ مِن دِينِي فَيُنْكِرُهُ \* ولا يُحَدِّثُنِي أَن سَوَفَ يَقْضِيَنِي<sup>(٣)</sup>  
وما كُفِّرِي شُكْرًا لَوْ يُوَاقِفُنِي \* ولا مَنَى كُفَّاهُ إِذْ يُنَيِّنِي<sup>(٤)</sup>

- (١) زيادة في ش . وفيها تصريح باسم الزاوي واسم أبيه المعروفين في كتب التراجم .  
(٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : « ويهْدِي بذكرها » . (٣) هذه الزيادة  
وقعت في هامش نسخة ش وعليها كلمة « صح » . (٤) أني لا يملك نفسه عن الخيام يا .  
(٥) كذا في ش . وفي سائر النسخ : « وقديما » .  
(٦) ملء بالهز أي فقه غي . قال صاحب اللسان : وقد أوقع فيه الناس بذكره أخضر وتشديد الياء .  
(٧) عدم أي قفروا له عدم يضم العين وسكون الدال . قال صاحب اللسان : إذا ضمت أوله خفت  
قلت : عدم وإذا فحمت أوله ثقلت قلت : عدم . (٨) يلونني : يمحطني ، يقال : لواء دينه  
وبدينه : محطه . (٩) كذا في ب ، س . وفي ش : « لا يبعد الغد من ديني فذكره » .  
وفي أ ، س ، م : « لا يترك البعض من ديني فينظره » . وفي ح : « لا يترك البعض من ديني  
فيكرهه » . (١٠) كذا في ب ، س ، م ، ح . وفي باقي النسخ : « إذ يواقفني » .

أُطْعِمَهُ وَعَصَبْتُ النَّاسَ كُتُبُهُمْ . في أمره ثم يأتي فيسوي يقصيني  
خَيْرِي لِمَنْ يَنْتَفِي خَيْرِي وَبِهْمُهُ \* من دون شَرِي وشَرِي غير مأمون  
وما أُنْشِرْتُ في رأيي أَخَا ضَعِيفٍ <sup>(١)</sup> . ولا أقولُ أَخِي مَنْ لَا يُؤَيِّنِي <sup>(٢)</sup>

في هذه الأبيات فَرَحٌ مُتَوَرِّدٌ لِلتَّوَلُّدِ مِنْ جَامِعِهِ .

وقال أبو عمرو الشَّيْبَانِيُّ : حَدَّثَنِي رَبَّاحُ الْعَامِرِيُّ - قَالَ : كَانَ الْمَجْنُونُ أَوَّلَ مَا عَلِقَ <sup>(٣)</sup>  
لِي كَثِيرَ اللَّهِ كَرَامًا وَالْإِثْمَيْنِ بِاللَّيْلِ إِلَيْهَا ، وَالْعَرَبُ تَرَى ذَلِكَ غَيْرَ مُتَكِرٍ أَنْ يَتَحَدَّثَ  
الْفَتَيَانُ إِلَى الْفَتَيَاتِ ، فَلَمَّا عَلِمَ أَهْلُهَا بِمَشْقِهِ لَمَّا مَنَعُوهُ مِنْ إِيَّانِهَا وَتَقَدَّمُوا إِلَيْهِ <sup>(٤)</sup> ،  
فَذَهَبَ لَذَلِكَ عَقْلُهُ وَيُسَّسَ مِنْهُ قَوْمُهُ وَآخَتُوا بِأُمُرِهِ <sup>(٥)</sup> ، وَاجْتَمَعُوا إِلَيْهِ وَلَا مَوَدَّ وَعَدَلُوهُ  
عَلَى مَا بَصُغُ بِنَفْسِهِ ، وَقَالُوا : وَاللَّهِ مَا هِيَ لَكَ بِهَذِهِ الْحَالِ ، فَلَو تَنَاسَيْتَهَا رَجَوْنَا أَنْ  
تَسْلُقَ قَلِيلًا ، فَقَالَ لَمَّا سَمِعَ مَقَاتِلَهُمْ وَقَدْ غَلَبَ عَلَيْهِ الْبُكَاءُ :

(١) الضعف هكذا . تحريف : لغة في الضعف بالفتح والكسرة . ويستعمل في ضعف الرأي  
والعقل . ونسبه عليه ابن الأعرابي هذا البيت . ويستعمل في ضعف الجسم ونسبه عليه :  
ومن يثر خيرا يفتقر لدمر عقله . على ضعف من حاله وقصور

(٢) كذا في الأصول ، ومعناه : يستغنى . ورواه صاحب التسان هكذا :

\* وَلَا أُلَيْنَ لِمَنْ لَا يَنْتَفِي لِيْنِي \*

(٣) في ش ٤ م : « رباح » وهو معروف ما يرجح إحدى الروايتين ، وقد سبق التنبيه على قول الحافظ  
الذهبي : « تسم رباح بالخوذة أكثره في الحوال » انظر الحاشية رقم ١ ص ٣٢٤ من الجزء الأول من  
هذا الكتاب . (٤) في ش : « عني » . (٥) أمره بالآلا يعود إلى  
تحدث إليها . (٦) في ش : « أيسر » . (٧) في ش ، ح :  
« واضعوا بأمره » .

## صوت

فواكِدْنا مِنْ حُبِّ مَنْ لَا يُجِيبُنِي . وَمِنْ زَقَرَاتِ مَاهِرٍ قَبْلَهُ  
 أَرَيْتُكَ إِنْ لَمْ أُعْطِكَ الْحُبَّ عَنْ يَدٍ . وَلَمْ يَكُ عِنْدِي إِذْ أَيْتَ إِبَاهُ  
 أَتَارِكْتَنِي لِلصَّوْتِ أَنْتِ قَبِيتُ . وَمَا لِلنَّفُوسِ الْخَائِفَاتِ بَقَاءُ  
 ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ فَقَالَ : إِنَّ الَّذِي بِي لَيْسَ بَيِّنٌ ، فَأَقْلُوا مِنْ مَلَامِكُمْ فَلَسْتُ  
 بِسَامِعٍ فِيهَا وَلَا مُطِيعٍ لِقَوْلِ قَائِلٍ .

أخبرني عمي ومحمد بن حبيب<sup>(٤)</sup> وأبْنُ الْمَرْزُبَانِ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي سَعْدٍ عَنْ  
 عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَبِي دَأْبٍ عَنْ رَبَاحِ بْنِ حَبِيبٍ الْعَامِرِيِّ :  
 قصة حب ليل  
 في رواية رباح  
 العامري

أَنَّهُ سَأَلَهُ عَنْ حَالِ الْمُحِبِّينَ وَلَيْلٍ ، فَقَالَ : كَانَتْ لَيْلٌ مِنْ بَنِي الْحَرِيشِ وَهِيَ  
 بِنْتُ مَهْدِيٍّ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ بْنِ مَهْدِيٍّ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ الْحَرِيشِ ، وَكَانَتْ مِنْ أَجْمَلِ  
 النِّسَاءِ وَأَطْرَفَيْنِ وَأَحْسَنَيْنِ جِسْمًا وَعَقْلًا وَأَفْضَلَيْنِ أَدْبًا وَأَمْنَحَيْنِ شِكْلًا ، وَكَانَ  
 الْمُحِبُّونَ يَكْلِفُوا بِمُحَادَثَةِ النِّسَاءِ صَبًّا بَيِّنًا ، فَيُلْقِيَنَّ خَبْرَهَا وَيُنَمِّتَ لَهُ ، فَيُعْبَا إِلَيْهَا وَعِزَمَ عَلَى  
 زِيَارَتِهَا ، فَتَأْتِيَهُ لَدَيْهِ وَلَيْسَ أَفْضَلَ شَيْءًا مِنْهُ وَرَجُلٌ جُمْتُهِ وَمَسَّ طَبِيبًا كَانَ عِنْدَهُ ،  
 وَأَرْتَحَلَ نَاقَةً لَهُ كَرِيمَةً بِرَجُلٍ حَسَنٍ وَتَشَدَّدَ سَيْفُهُ وَأَتَانَاهَا ، فَسَلَّمَ فَرَدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ  
 وَتَحَفَّتْ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ ، وَجَلَسَ إِلَيْهَا خَادِمَتُهُ وَحَدَّثَهَا فَأَكْثَرَا . وَكُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا مُقْبِلٌ عَلَى

(١) كذا في س . س . ش . وهو متروك متوقع له خفته ثلث النسخة بعد حذف ياء المشكم .  
 وفي بقية النسخ : « فواكِدْني » ياء المشكم . (٢) أصله أَرَيْتُكَ حَدَّثْتُ مَرِيَّةً . وهي كلمة تنفوخها  
 العرب للاستخبار فهي بمعنى أخبرني . (٣) يقال : أعطاه كذا عن يده أي عن اقتياده وأَسْلَمَ .  
 (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : « عمي وحبيب بن نصر » . (٥) في ش :  
 « رباح » بالياء . (٦) تقدمت في ص ١١ من هذا الجزء « ليل بنت مهدي بن سعد » . (٧) كذا  
 في ش . وفي ح : « أُنْخِطُ الْمَسْأَلَةَ » ومما يالفت في ملاحظته وتساؤل عنه . وفي بقية  
 النسخ : « أُنْخِطُ الْمَسْأَلَةَ » بفتح النجمة وهو تحريف .

صاحبه مُعَجَّب به ، فم يزلا كذلك حتى أَسِيَا ، فانصرف إلى أهله فبِتَ باطول  
ليلة شوقا إليها ، حتى إذا أصبح عاد إليها فلم يزل عندها حتى أَمْسَى ، ثم انصرف  
إلى أهله فبِت باطول من ليلته الأولى وأجتهَد أن يُفِضَ فلم يقدر على ذلك ،  
فأنشأ يقول :

نَهَارِي نَهَارُ النَّاسِ حَتَّى إِذَا بَدَأَ • لِي اللَّيْلُ قَرَنَتْنِي إِلَيْكَ الْمُضَاجِعُ  
أَقْفَى نَهَارِي بِالْحَسْبِ وَإِلْمُنَى • وَيَحْمَنِي وَاهْمٌ بِاللَّيْلِ جَمِيعُ  
لَقَدْ ثَبَّتُ فِي الْقَلْبِ مِنْكَ مَحَبَّةً • كَمَا ثَبَّتُ فِي الرَّاحَتَيْنِ الْأَصَابِعُ

- عَرَوْضُهُ مِنَ الطَّوِيلِ • وَالْفَنَاءُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُوَصِّلِي رَمْلٌ بِالْوُسْطَى عَنْ عَمْرٍو - قَالَ :  
وَأَدَامَ زِيَارَتَهَا وَتَرَكَ مَنْ كَانَ بِأَيْمِهِ فَيَتَحَدَّثُ إِلَيْهِ غَيْرَهَا ، وَكَانَ بِأَيْمِهَا فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ  
فَلَا يَزَالُ عَنْدهَا نَهَارَهُ أَجْمَعَ حَتَّى إِذَا أَمْسَى انْصَرَفَ ، فَخَرَجَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ يَرِيدُ زِيَارَتَهَا  
فَلَمَّا قَرُبَ مِنْ مَقَرِّهَا لَقِيَتْهُ جَارِيَةٌ عَسْرَاءُ فَطَظِيرُهَا ، وَأَنشَأَ يَقُولُ :

وَكَيْفَ بَرَّيْتُ وَصُلَّ لَيْلِي وَقَدْ جَرَى • يَجْسَدُ الْقُوَى وَالْوَصْلُ أَعْسَرُ حَاسِرُ<sup>(١)</sup>  
صَدِيقُ الْعَقَا صَغْبُ الْمَرَامِ إِذَا اتَّخَمَى • لَوْصِلَ أَمْرِي جُنْتُ عَلَيْهِ الْأَوَاصِرُ<sup>(٢)</sup>

- (١) سَأَقِي هَذِهِ الْآيَاتِ فِي تَفْصِيلَةٍ مَسْرُوبَةٍ إِلَى قَبَسِ بْنِ ذَرِيحٍ بِإِلْزَامِ الثَّامِنِ مِنَ الْأَعْنَاقِ طَبْعُ يُولَاقِ .  
(٢) أَيْ شَوْمِ • (٣) الْجَسَدُ : الْقَطْعُ • وَتَقْوَى : جَمْعُ قُوَّةٍ وَهِيَ الْعَاقَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ مِنَ حَاقَاتِ  
الْجَبَلِ • (٤) أَحْسَرُ : الْكَاشَفُ يَوْصَفُ بِهِ الرَّجُلُ وَالْمَرْأَةُ ، يُقَالُ : أَمْرَأَةٌ حَاسِرٌ بِغَيْرِهَا .  
إِذَا حَسَرَتْ عَنْهَا دَرْعُهَا ، وَكُلٌّ مَكْشُوفَةُ الرَّأْسِ وَالذُّوَاعَيْنِ : حَاسِرٌ • (٥) مِنْ تَصَدُّعٍ بِمَعْنَى  
الْتَقَى وَهُوَ كِتَابَةٌ عَنِ الْفَرَقِ • قَالَ أَبُو الْفَيْضِ : الْعَصَا تُضْرِبُ ثَلَاثَ الْجَنَاحِ وَتُضْرِبُ انْتِفَاقَهَا مَثَلًا  
لِلْإِتْرَاقِ الَّذِي لَا يَكُونُ بِعِنْدِهِ اجْتِمَاعٌ ، وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّهُ لَا تَدْعَى عَصَا إِذَا انْتَفَتَتْ ( أَنْظِرْ لِسَانَ الْعَرَبِ  
مَادَّةَ مَدْعٍ ) • (٦) اتَّخَمَى : قَصَدَ • (٧) الْأَوَاصِرُ : جَمْعُ أَمْرَةٍ وَهِيَ مَا عَقَلْتَكَ عَلَى رَجُلٍ  
مِنْ رِجَمٍ أَوْ قَرَابَةٍ أَوْ صَبْرًا أَوْ مَعْرُوفًا •

ثم سار إليها في غدٍ فحدثها بقصته وطيرته من لقيه ، وأنه يخاف تغير عهدها  
وأنتكاته وبكى ، فقالت : لا تُرَخَّ<sup>(١)</sup> ، حاشَ لله من تغيَّرَ عهدي ، لا يكون والله ذلك  
أبداً إن شاء الله ، فلم يزل عندها يُحدثها بقية يومه ، ووقع له في قلبها مثل ما وقع لها  
في قلبه ، فلما يوما كما كان يحيى ، وأقبل يُحدثها فأعرضت عنه ، وأقبلت على  
غيره بمحدثها ، تريد بذلك يحته وأن تعلم ما في قلبه ، فلما رأى ذلك جَزَعَ جَزَعاً  
شديداً حتى بان في وجهه وعُرف فيه ، فلما خافت عليه أقبلت عليه كالسُرَّةِ إليه  
فقالت :

كَلَّا نَا مُظْهِرٌ لِلنَّاسِ بَغْضًا • وَكُلُّ عِنْدَ صَاحِبِهِ مَكِينٌ

فَسَرَى<sup>(٢)</sup> عَنْهُ وَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قَلْبِهَا ، فقالت له : إنما أردتُ أن أمتحنَكَ والذي لك  
عندي أكثر من الذي لي عندكَ ، وأُعْطِيَ اللهَ عهداً إن جالستُ بعد يومٍ هذا  
رجلاً سِوَاكَ حتى أذوقَ الموتَ إلا أن أُكْرَهَ على ذلك ، قال : فأنصرفت عنه وهو  
من أشد الناس سرورا وأفرهم عينا ، وقال :

أَنْظُرْ هَوَاهَا تَارِكِي بِمَفْصَلَةٍ<sup>(٣)</sup> • مِنْ الْأَرْضِ لَا مَالٌ لَدَيَّ وَلَا أَهْلٌ  
وَلَا أَحَدٌ أَفْضَى إِلَيْهِ وَصِيَّتِي • وَلَا صَاحِبٌ إِلَّا الْمَطْبَةُ وَالرَّحْلُ  
مَحَا حُبَّهَا حُبُّ الْأَلَى كُنْ قَبْلَهَا • وَحَنَّتْ مَكَانًا لَمْ يَكُنْ حُلٌّ مِنْ قَبْلُ

أَخْبَرَنِي جَعْفَرُ بْنُ قُدَّامَةَ عَنْ أَبِي الْعِيَاءِ عَنِ النَّعْنِيِّ قَالَ :

شعره فيها بعد أن  
تزوجت وأيسر  
منها

- (١) لا ترخ : لا تخف ولا يلحقك فرح . (٢) كذا في ت . وفي سائر النسخ :  
« يحدثها » . (٣) أي أنجل هم وانكشف . (٤) في ت : « فأنصرفت عنها وهو الخ » .  
(٥) المصنف بفتح الصاد . وكسر هـ : الأرض التي يفسل فيها . (٦) كذا في جميع الأصول .  
ولم نجد في كتب اللغة التي بين أيدينا أفصى متعباً بنفسه والوارد تعدي بالباء . يقال : أفصيت إليه  
بسرى ، ولعله في الأصل « أفصى » بالفتح تقول : قضيت إليه الأمر أي أنهيت إليه وأبلغته ذلك .  
(٧) كذا في ت . وقد تقدم كذلك غير مرة . وفي باقي النسخ : « أبو جعفر » .

لما حُجِبَتْ لِي عن المجنون خطبها جماعة فلم يرضهم أهلها، وخطبها رجل من ثقيف مؤسّر فزوجوه وأخفّوا ذلك عن المجنون ثم نفي إليه طرف منه لم يتحققه، فقال :

دعوتُ إني دعوة ما جهتها • وربي بما تُخفي الصدور بصير<sup>(٢)</sup>  
لئن كنت تُهدي بدّ أنيابها العلا • لأنقصر سني إني لتغير<sup>(٣)</sup>  
فقد شاعت الأخبار أن قد تزوجت • فهل يأتيني بالطلاق بشير<sup>(٤)</sup>  
وقال أيضا :

ألا تلك ليلى العامرية أصبحت • تقطعُ إلا من ثقيف جبالها  
مُحبوها تحبّس اليدين وأبتنى • بها المال أفوامُ ألا قلّ مالها<sup>(٥)</sup>  
إذا ألتفت واليس صغر من البرى • بخلة جلت عبرة العين حالها<sup>(٦)</sup>  
قال : وجعل يتربّيتها فلا يسأل عنها ولا يثبّت إليه ، ويقول إذا جاوزه :

(١) كذا في ش • وفي باقي النسخ : من بن ثقيف وثقيف : أبو حي من نيس أو من هوازن ، والأغلب عليه التذكير فيصرف • قال سيوريه : أما قولهم : هذه ثقيف فل ارادة الجماعة • قال صاحب اللسان : وإنما قال ذلك لثقة التذكير فيه وهو ما لا يقال فيه من بن فلان ، وكذلك كل ما لا يقال فيه من بن فلان التذكير فيه أغرب ، وهذا أثبت ما في نسخة ش بالأصل اذ مقتضى عبارة اللسان أنه يقال : فلان من ثقيف ولا يقال من بن ثقيف ، كما يقال : فلان من قرين أو معه ولا يقال : من بن قرين أو من بن معه • (٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ • وفي ش « غيبير » •

(٣) في نسخة ش • وكتاب تزيين الأسواق ص ٦٦ ضع يولاق :

• لئن كان يهدي بدّ أنيابها العلا •

(٤) كذا في الديوان • وفي جميع الأصول : « اذا ما ألتفت » • (هـ) صغر : جمع أصغر

من الصغر وهو ميل في اختار • والجري : جمع برة وهو الخفة تجعل في أحد جانبي منفراب صير • وخلة :

اسم موضع • (٦) في ش • ص • ح • « أليها » •

## صوت

ألا أيها البيت الذي لا أزوره • وإن حله شخص إلى حبيب  
هجرتك إشفافاً وزرعت خاتماً • وفيك على الدمر منك رقيب  
ماستعب الأيام فيك لعلها • بيوم سرود في الزمان قروب

الفناء لعريب ثاني ثقيل بالوسطى . قال : وبلغه أن أهلها يريدون نقلها إلى  
التقني فقال :

## صوت

كان القلب ليلة قبل بغدى • بيل العاصرية أو برآح  
قطاة عزها شرك نبات • مجاذبه وقد علق الجناح

- عروضة من الوافر . الفناء لابن المكي خفيف ثقيل [أول] بالوسطى في مجراها  
عن إسحاق ، وفيه خفيف ثقيل آخر لسان مطلق في مجرى النصر ، وفيه لإبراهيم  
رمل بالوسطى في مجراها عن المشامي - قال : فلما قلت [ليل] إلى التقني قال :  
طربت وشاقتك الحمول الدوافع • غداة دعا بالين أسفع نازع<sup>(١)</sup>  
تحت فاه نعباً بالفراق كأنه • حريب سلب نازح الدار جازع<sup>(٢)</sup>

نصبت العينة

- (١) عزها : غيا . وف ب ، س : « غرها » باثنين والراء ، والأول أنب بالتشديد .  
(٢) زيادة في ت . (٣) الحمول : في الأصل الموادج واحداً حمل ثم اتسع فيها  
وصارت تستعمل في الإبل اتى عليها الموادج . والموافع : المندفة في السير . (٤) كذا في أغلب  
النسخ وتزين الأسواق . وف ب ، س : « أحم » والأسفع والأحم متاهما واحداً وهو  
الأمود . والتازع : المزعج . والمراد بالأسفع التازع « الغراب » . (٥) غداة بشوه  
بريشاء : فعه . (٦) نيا : صباحاً ونصوتاً . (٧) الحريب : من طهره  
رعى ماله الذي يقوم به أمره .



قُلْتُ أَلَا قَدْ بَيْنَ الْأَمْرِ فَانْصِرَفَ ۖ فَقَدْ رَاعَنَا بِالْبَيْنِ قَبْلَكَ رَامِعُ  
 سُبَيْتٌ كَمَا مِنْ غَرَابٍ فَاثْنَى ۖ تَبَيَّنْتُ مَا خَبَّرْتَ مَذْنُتَ وَأَقْعُ  
 أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنِّي لَا يُحِبُّ الْوُسْهَ ۖ وَلَا يَسْدِيلُ بِمَدْمٍ أَنَا قَانِعُ  
 [ أَلَمْ تَرَدَّ الْحَيَّ فِي رَوْقِي الضَّحَى ۖ بَحْتُ أَنْخَنْتُ لِلْمَهْضَبَيْنِ الْأَجَارِعُ ]  
 وَقَدْ يَنْهَى الْإِلْفُ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَقْرِ ۖ وَيَصْدَعُ مَا بَيْنَ الْخَلِيطَيْنِ صَادِعُ  
 وَكَمْ مِنْ هَوَى أَوْ جَبْرِيَّةٍ قَدْ أَثْنَمَهُ ۖ زَمَانًا فَلَمْ يَنْتَهِمُ الْبَيْنَ مَانِعُ  
 كَأَنِّي غَدَاةَ الْبَيْنِ مَبْتُ جَوْبَةٍ ۖ أَخَوْظِلًا سُدْتُ عَلَيْهِ الْمَشَارِعُ  
 تَحْلَسُ مِنْ أَوْشَالٍ مَاءٍ صُبَابَةٍ ۖ فَلَا الشَّرْبُ مَبْدُولٌ وَلَا هُوَ نَاقِعُ  
 وَبَيْضُ تَقْلٍ بِالْعَيْسِرِ كَأَنَّهُ ۖ نَعَاجُ الْمَلَا جِيَتْ عَلَيْهَا الْبَرَاقِعُ  
 تَحْلَنُ مِنْ وَادِي الْأَرَاكِ فَأَوْصَعَتْ ۖ حُنَّ بِأَطْرَافِ الْعَيُونِ الْمَلَامِعُ

- (١) بَيْنَ بمعنى تَيْنٌ، ومنه المثل : « قَدْ بَيْنَ النَّصِيحَ لَدَى عَيْنَيْنِ » . (٢) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخ .  
 رَفِي شَ ، حـ وَتَزِينِ الْأَسْوَاقِ لَدَاوِدِ الْأَنْطَاكِ سَبْعَ يَوْلَاقِ : « سَمَامَا » وَهُوَ جَمْعُ لَمْ كَسْرُوم .  
 (٣) وَقَعَ الْفَائِرُ : نَزَلَ عَنْ طَيْرَانِهِ عَلَى شَجَرَةٍ أَوْ غَيْرِهَا . (٤) زِيَادَةٌ فِي شَ وَتَزِينِ الْأَسْوَاقِ .  
 وَالْمَهْضَبَانِ : مَنَى هَضْبَةً وَهِيَ الرَّابِيعَةُ أَوْ الْبَيْضُ الْخَاضِعُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَوْ الْجَبَلِ الْمَخْلُوقِ مِنْ صَخْرَةٍ  
 وَاحِدَةٍ ، وَالْأَجَارِعُ : جَمْعُ نَجْرٍ ، وَالْأَجْرُ كَالْخِرَاجِ : الْأَرْضُ ذَاتُ الْخَزْوَةِ تَسَاكِلِ الرِّيلِ أَوْ الرِّمَّةِ  
 السَّجْلَةِ الْمُسْتَوِيَةِ أَوْ الْقَضَةِ مِنَ الرِّيلِ لَا تَنْتَبِثُ شَيْئًا ( انظر السَّانِ فِي مَا قَدْ قُصِبَ وَجَرَعُ ) .  
 (٥) هَوَى بِمَعْنَى الْمَهْوَى وَهُوَ الْمَحْبُوبُ ، وَهَذَا قَوْلُ الشَّاعِرِ :  
 هَوَايَ مَعَ الرِّكْبِ الْيَمَانِيْنِ مُصِيبَةٌ ۖ جَبَبَ وَجْهَانِي بِمَعْنَى مُوقِفَ  
 (٦) كَذَا فِي شَ وَتَزِينِ الْأَسْوَاقِ . وَفِي بَاقِي النُّسخِ : « فَلَمْ يَنْتَهِمُ الْبَيْنَ مَانِعُ » .  
 (٧) الْجَوْبَةُ : فُضَاءٌ أَمْلَسَ مَهْلِكُ بَيْنِ الْأَرْضَيْنِ . (٨) تَحْلَسُ الشَّيْءُ : اتَّجَبَ وَأَخَذَهُ خِلْفَةً .  
 (٩) الْأَوْشَالُ : جَمْعُ وَشَلٍ وَهُوَ الْمَاءُ الْقَلِيلُ . وَالصُّبَابَةُ : بَقِيَّةُ الْمَاءِ تَبَيَّنَ فِي الْإِتَاءِ وَالسَّقَاءِ .  
 (١٠) هُوَ مِنْ قَعٍّ بِمَعْنَى دَوَى . (١١) الْمَلَا : النُّصْرَاءُ . (١٢) نِي تَقْلَتُ .  
 (١٣) هُوَادٌ قَرِيبُ مَكَّةَ . (١٤) فِي شَ : « وَأَوْصَعَتْ » بِالْوَاوِ .

(١) فما رَمَنَ رِيحَ الدَّارِ حَتَّى تَشَابَهَتْ • هَجَاتُهَا وَالْجُؤُنُ مِنْهَا الْخَوَاضِعُ<sup>(٢)</sup>  
 وَحَتَّى حَمَلَنَ الْخَوَرُ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ • وَخَاضَتْ مُدَوَّلَ الزَّرْقَمِ مِنْهَا الْأَكَارِعُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
 فَلَمَّا أَسْتَوَتْ تَحْتَ الْخُدُورِ وَقَدْ جَرَى • عَجَبٌ وَمَسْكٌ بِالْعَرَانِيَنِ رَادِعُ<sup>(٤)</sup>  
 أَتَرَنَ بَانَ حُثُوا الْجَمَالَ فَقَدْ بَدَأَ • مِنَ الصَّيْفِ يَوْمٌ لَا يَخُفُّ الْحَرَّ مَا نَبَعَ<sup>(٥)</sup>  
 فَلَمَّا حَقَّقْنَا بِالْحُسُولِ تَبَاثَرَتْ • بِنَا مُقْصِرَاتٌ غَابَ عَنْهَا الْمَطَاعِ<sup>(٦)</sup>  
 يُعْرِضُنَ بِالذَّلِّ الْمَلِيحِ وَإِنْ يَرُدُّ • جَنَاهُنَّ مَشْغُوفٌ فَهِنَّ مَوَانِعُ<sup>(٧)</sup>

(١) كذا في ش ، ح ومناه ما برحن . يقال : ما رام المكان أي ما برحه . وفي باقي النسخ :  
 « رَضَنَ » بالضاد ولم يظهر له معنى . (٢) الهجائن : الإبل البيضاء الكريمة واحدها هجان .  
 والجؤن : جمع جون يفتح الحيم وهو الأسود الشرب بحمرة ، ويطلق على الأسود اليعقوبي وعلى  
 الأبيض فهو من أسماء الأضداد . (٣) الخواضع : الإبل وإنما يقال لها خواضع لأنها تخضع  
 أعناقها حين يجدها السير ، قال جرير :

وَقَدْ ذَكَرْتُكَ وَالْمَرْءَ خَوَاضِعٌ • وَكَأَنَّ قَطَا فَسَلَاً يَجْهَلُ

(٤) الخور : جمع حوراء وهي البيضاء أو من في عنها حور وهو شدة سواد المقلة في شدة يانِب .  
 (٥) السدول : جمع سديل وهو ما يجلل به الخودج من الثياب . (٦) الأكراع :  
 جمع أكرع والأكرع جمع كراع ، أو الأكراع كما يقول سيبويه جمع كراع على غير قياس . والكراع  
 من الإنسان : ما دون الركبة إلى الكعب ، ومن الدابة قوائمها مطلقاً . (٧) المراد بالرادع  
 هنا المددوع به الجسد أو الثوب وهو تعبير والمسك . وأصل الرذع الطعق بالفتح والضم والضمير ،  
 يقال : قبض رادع ومردوع أي فيه أثر الغيب والضران ، وفي حديث ابن عباس رضي الله  
 عنهما : « لم يسه عن شيء من الأدوية إلا عن الرظفة التي تردع الجسد » أي تنفض مسبها  
 عليه . (٨) المنيب : الطويل . (٩) كذا في ش ، ب ، س وهو جمع  
 مُقْصِرَةٍ أي داخلة في القصر وهو المني ، يقال : أتته قَصْرًا أي عشياً ، وقصرت أي دخلت في قصر العشي .  
 كما تقول أصبنا من المساء . وفي سائر النسخ : « مُعْصِرَاتٌ » بالعين المهملة وهو جمع مُعْصِرَةٍ من  
 الْمُعْصِرَاتِ الجارية إذا بلغت عُصْرَ شبابها ، أو من أَعْصَرَتْ أي دخلت في الْعَصْرِ (انظر لسان العرب مادة نصر  
 وعصر) . (١٠) كذا في جميع النسخ . وفي ش وتزيين الأسواق : « الخُضَعُ » باللام .  
 (١١) كذا في ش . وفي ب ، س : « مُعْرِضٌ » . وفي أ ، ح ، م : « مُعْرِضٌ » .

فقلت لأصحابي ودمي سبيل . وقد صدع الشمل المشتت صاع  
أليل بأبواب الخدور تعرضت . يعني أم قول من الشعر طالع

أخبرني عيسى بن الحسين الوراق قال حدثنا أبي بن قيس قال حدثني  
المعمر بن عيسى عن أبيه بن عدي :

مروره مع ابن عم  
له على حامة  
تهدن وما قال  
في ذلك من  
الشعر

أن أبا مجنون حج به ليدعو الله عز وجل في الموقف أن يعافيه ، فسار ومعه ابن  
عمه زياد بن كعب بن مزاحم ، فترجمامة تدعو على أبنك فوقك يكي ، فقال له  
زياد : أي شيء هذا؟ ما بينك أيضا؟ سرينا نلحق الرفقة ، فقال :

أنا خفت يوما بواد حامة . بكيت ولم بتذك بالجهل عاذر  
دعت ساق مر بعد ما علت الضحى . فهاج لك الأحران أن تاح طائر  
تغنى الضحى والضحى في مريحته . يخاف الأعلى تحتها الماء حائر  
كان لم يكن بالليل أو بطن أبنك . أو الخزع من تول الأشاء حاضر

- (١) كذا في ش . وفي سائر النسخ : « فسار ومعه الخ » . (٢) تدعو : تصوت  
وتسبح . (٣) ساق حر : أصحه صوت القمارى . ويشتق عن الذكر من القمارى نسبة له باسم  
صوته وهو المراد . (انظر لسان مدق موق وحر) . (٤) كذا في ش وتزيين الأسواق .  
وفي م : « سرى » هكذا بدون الخ . وفي باقي النسخ هكذا : « نعى » . (٥) كذا  
في أغلب الأصول ، والمرحمة : نهضة القملة . (٦) حائر : متوقد . (٧) أثيل :  
اسم لغة مواضع وانفاها أن المراد هنا واد لبي جمعة وهم قوم المجنون . (٨) الأبنك :  
القبضة المشقة الأشجار . ولم نجد في الكتب التي بأيدينا « أبنك » ولا « بطن أبنك » اسما لموضع حاضر  
(٩) الخزع - بالكسرة وقال أبو عبيدة : اللاق به أن يكون مفتوحا - : متعطف الوادى ونفقه هنا  
اسم موضع حصه . وقد يكون جرح بن جمار وهو واد بنجامة . (١٠) كذا في س . س .  
وفي بقية النسخ : « قول » بفتح واو . يظهر لكنا لتسعين معنى . والأطباء : موضع بنجامة فيه  
نخيل مع كمة « تول » مخزقة عن « تول » وإثقال : مغارة النخل وجمعه قاعة .

يقول زيادٌ <sup>(١)</sup> إذ رأى أخى <sup>(٢)</sup> هجرُوا • أرى أخى قد ساروا فهل أنت سائرٌ  
ورأى وإن غَال <sup>(٣)</sup> التَّفَادُّمَ حاجتى • مُلِمٌ على أوطانٍ لَيْلٍ قَنَاطِرُ <sup>(٤)</sup>

أخبرنى [محمد بن مزيد] <sup>(٥)</sup> بن أبى الأزهر عن الزبير عن محمد بن عبد الله البكرى  
عن موسى بن جعفر بن أبى كثير وأخبرنى عمى عن [عبد الله] <sup>(٦)</sup> بن قيسب عن  
[هارون بن موسى] <sup>(٥)</sup> القروى عن موسى بن جعفر بن أبى كثير وأخبرنى ابنُ المرزبان  
عن ابنِ الحُبم عن العُمري عن العُتبي قالوا جميعا :

هياه ال نواحي  
الشام وما يقوله  
من الشمر ضد  
عوده وروية  
التوباد

كان المجنون وليلى وهما صبيان يرعبان غما لأهلها عند جبل في بلادها يقال  
له التوبادُ، فلما ذهب عقله وتوحش، كان يئىء إلى ذلك الجبل فيقيمُ به، فإذا  
تذكر أيامَ كان يُطيفُ هو وليلى به جَزَعَ جَزَعاً شديداً واستوحش فهام على وجهه  
حتى يأتى نواحي الشام، فإذا تاب إليه عقله رأى بلدا لا يعرفه فيقول للناس الذين  
يلقاهم : بأبى أتم، أين التوبادُ من أرض بنى عامر ؟ فيقال له : وأين أنت من  
أرض بنى عامر ! أنت بالشام عليك نجيم كذا قائمٌ، فيمضى على وجهه نحو ذلك  
النجم حتى يقع بأرض إثنين، فيرى بلداً يُنكرها وقوما لا يعرفهم فيسألهم عن التوباد

(١) كذا في ب، س، ش • وفي باقي النسخ : «ن رأى» • (٢) هجرُوا : ساروا  
في وقت الهجرة • (٣) غَال الثرى : ذهب به • (٤) كذا في ش • ويزيد الأمازيغ  
وفي باقي النسخ : «ناظر» بللم • (٥) زيادة في ش • (٦) كذا في ش  
«القروى» باقاه وهو الموافق لما في كتب التراجم مثل تهذيب التهذيب واختلاصة والأنساب لسعافى •  
وفي بقية النسخ : «الهروى» بالهماء وهو تحريف • (٧) كذا في جميع الأصول «التوباد»  
بالهال المهملة وهو الموافق لما في صحيح ما أمتنع للبكرى إذ قال في ضبطه : هو فتح أوله وباء معجمة  
برأحة ودال مهملة وأنشد عليه : وأجهت لتوباد حين رأته • البيت  
و ضبطه ياقوت بالهال المعجمة فقال في معجمه : «توباد» بفتح ثم السكون والياء موحدة وآخره ذال  
معجمة : جبل بجمد •

وأرض بن عمرو، فيقولون: وأين أنت من أرض بن عمرو! عليك نجم كذا وكذا،  
فلا يزال كذلك حتى يقع على التوباد، فإذا رآه قال في ذلك :

آياته الونية التي  
يصف بها انصاب  
الدمع

وأجهشتُ للتوباد حين رأيته • وكبر للرحمن حين رأيته<sup>(١)</sup>  
وأذريتُ دمع العين لما عرفته • ونادى بأعلى مسوته فدعاني<sup>(٢)</sup>  
قلتُ له قد كان حولك جيرة • وعهدى بذلك القمر منذ زمان<sup>(٣)</sup>  
فقال مضوا واستودعوني بلادهم • ومن ذا الذي بقي على الحدائق<sup>(٤)</sup>  
وإني لأبكي اليوم من حذري غدا • فراقك والحيار مجتعمان<sup>(٥)</sup>  
سجلا وتناثا ووبلا وديمة • ومحا ونسجاما في مملات<sup>(٦)</sup>

- (١) أجهشت : تهايت للبكاء . (٢) كذا في جميع الأصول . وفي الديوان : « وعلل » .  
(٣) كذا في ش . والديوان وترين الأسواق . وفي بقية الأصول : « وأذرفت » وبه نحد « أذرف » .  
في كتب القصة التي بأيدينا ، ونما يقال : ذرفت العين الدمع وذرفته بالتضعيف أي أساله .  
(٤) ورد بدل هذا البيت في الديوان بيت آخر وهو :

قلت له أين الذين همستهم • حوائيك في حب وحب زمان

وجاءت القصيدة في ترين الأسواق مشتقة على البيتين فأورد البيت الذي في الأصول ثم جاء بعده باليت  
الثاني هكذا :

قلت له أين الذين همستهم • بقربك في حفظ وحب أمان

- (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ والديوان . وفي ش . وترين الأسواق لداود الأنطاكي : « ديارهم » .  
(٦) كذا في أغلب الأصول والديوان . وفي ش . وترين الأسواق : « مؤتفان » . (٧) يقال :  
هنت السهات هنتا أي صبت . (٨) يقال : هنت السهات مطرها تسجيا وتسجاما إذا  
صبته . (٩) كذا في الديوان ، والمسلان : قبض العين بالدمع . وفي جميع الأصول  
« وتبملان » .

سبب ذهاب عقله <sup>(١)</sup> أخبرني عمي عن [عبد الله] بن شبيب عن هارون بن موسى القسري عن موسى بن جعفر بن أبي كثير قال : لما قال المجنون :

خلي - لا والله لا أملك الذي • قضى الله في ليلى ولا ما قضى لي  
قضاها لغيري وأبتلاني بحبها • فهلاً بشيء غير ليلى أبتلاني  
سلب عقله .

وحدثني جحظة عن ميمون بن هارون عن إسحاق الموصلي أنه لما قالها برص .

قال موسى بن جعفر في خبره المذكور : وكان المجنون يسير مع أصحابه نسمع صائحا يصيح : يا ليلى في ليلة ظلماء أو توهم ذلك ، فقال لبعض من معه : أما تسمع هذا الصوت ؟ فقال : ما سمعت شيئا ، قال : ليلى ، والله هاتفت يهتف بليلى ، ثم أنشأ يقول :

شعره حين نوم  
أن صائحا يصيح :  
يا ليلى

أقول لأدنى صاحبي كلمة • أشرت من الأقصى أحب ذا المناديا  
إذا أشرت في الأرض القضا رأيتني • أصابع رجلي أن يميل حباليا  
يمينا إذا كانت يمينا وإنا نكن • شمالا ينازعني الهوى عن شماليا

(١) جاء في صلب نسخة سـ جدا انتهاء القصيدة وقبل قوله « أخبرني » ما نقله : « الجهمش : أن يفرغ الإنسان إلى غيره وهو مع ذلك شبيهاً للكل كالصبي يفرغ إلى أمه وقد نبأ للكاهن : يقال : جهش إليه يجهش ، وفي الحديث « طال بنا العيش فجهشنا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم » وكذلك الاجتهاش يقال : جهشت بنفسي وأجهشت » ولم تنق بصحة هذه الزيادة حتى تشبهاً في الصلب لأن وجدناها في نسخة م موضوعة في الصلب قبل القصيدة بل قبل البيت الأول التي هي شرح لبعض مفرداته ووجدناها بحاشية نسخة أ في صورة شرح لقوله « وأجهشت » ومعززة إلى الجوهري وهي نص عبارته في كتاب الصحاح ، والظاهر أن بعض النسخ وجد هذا التعليق على حاشية إحدى نسخ الكتاب فقله من الأصل وأدخله في الصلب . (٢) زيادة في تـ . (٣) كذا في ب ، سـ والديوان والرجل : ما يوضع على البعير لتركوب ثم يبر به عن البعير وهو المراد هنا . وفي أغلب النسخ : « رجل أن تيل حباليا » .

وقال ابن شبيب وحدثني هارون بن موسى قال : قلت لغيرير بن طلحة<sup>(١)</sup> شعره في بني المخزومي : مَنْ أشعرُ الناس من قال شعرا في منى ومكة وعمرات ؟ فقال : أصحابنا القرشيون ، ولقد أحسن المجنون حيث يقول :

وداع دعا إذ نحن بالخيف من منى • فهيجَ أحزانَ التواء وما يدري  
دعا باسم ليلى غيرها فكأنما • أطارَ بيلي طائراً كان في صدري

قلت له : هل تروى للمجنون غيره هذا ؟ قال : نعم ، وأشدني له :

أما والذي أرتي نسيراً مكانه • عليه السحابُ فوقه ينصب<sup>(٢)</sup>  
وما سلكَ المومة<sup>(٣)</sup> من كل جسر<sup>(٤)</sup> • طليح<sup>(٥)</sup> بكفن السيف تهوى فتركب<sup>(٦)</sup>  
لقد عشتُ من ليلي زماناً أحباً • أذا الموت إذ بعض المحبين يكذب

(١) اختفت النسخ في هذا الاسم فوقع في ب ، ح : « عزيز » بمهمات وفي م : « جرير » وفي ش : « عزيز » بين مهملة وزاين وفي م ، س ، ا : « شرير » بين معجمة ورايين وقد اعتدنا فيما أثبتناه بالصلب على ما جاء في تاج العروس حيث ذكر في مادة « غرر » من يسون بغيرير كبر وعنه منهم غيرير بن طلحة القرشي .

وجاء هذا الاسم في الجزء الثالث عشر من الأغاني ص ١٧ : مع يوافق هكذا « غيرير بن طلحة » بين معجمة ثم مهملين وجاء في تاج العروس في مادة رقم بعد ذكر أبي عبد الله الأرقم المخزومي ما نصه : « ومن ولده عزيز بن طلحة بن عبد الله بن عثمان بن الأرقم » وتظهر أنه هو غيرير بن طلحة وإنما وقعت قطة اللين على الراء .

وفي كتاب الأنساب لسمعان في اسم « الأرقم » : « واشتهر بهند نسبة عزيز بن طلحة بن عبد الله بن الأرقم من أهل مكة » هكذا بين مهملة وزاين معجمين وتظهر أنه « غيرير » حتى يوافق ما ذكره صاحب تاج العروس في مادة غرر .

(٢) كذا في أغلب الأصول وديوانه وكتاب الشعر والشعراء . وفي ش : « أطراب » وهو ما انفقت عليه الأصول فيما تقدم بصحيفة ٢٢ من هذا الجزء . (٣) ينصب : يرتفع .

(٤) كذا في أغلب الأصول . وفي ش : « البيوة » بانية وكلاماً صحيحاً فإن المومة والبيوة معناها واحد وهو القفلة . (٥) يقال : قفة جسر متجاسرة : ماضية في سيرها . وفي ش : « فضية » وهي التي مرها السير . (٦) يقال : قفة طليح إذا جهده السير وهرقا .

أخبرني محمد بن مزيد عن حماد [بن إسحاق] <sup>(١)</sup> عن أبيه قال : كانت كنية ليل  
أم عمرو، وأنشد للجنون :

### صوت

أبى التَّلبُ إلا حُبُّه عامرية • لها كنية عمرو وليس لها عمرو  
تكاد يدي تندي إذا مالستها • وبنت في أطرافها الورق الخضر  
الفناء لعريب نقيلاً أول، وقال حبش : فيه لإسحاق خفيف ثقيل •

أخبرني هاشم [بن محمد] الخراعي عن دماذ عن أبي عبيدة قال : خطب ليل <sup>(٢)</sup>  
صاحبة المجنون جماعة من قومها فكبرتهم ، فخطبها رجل من قبيص مومس فوضيعة :  
وكان جملاً فتزوجها وخرج بها ، فقال المجنون في ذلك :  
تزوج ليل رجل  
من قبيص ومقاله  
المجنون في ذلك  
من الشعر

ألا إن ليل كالمليحة أصبحت • تقطع إلا من تقيب جالماً  
فقد حبسوها بحبس البذن وأبتى • يا الريح أقوام تساحت مالها  
خليل هل من حيلة تعلماتها • يدي لنا تكيم نير أحيائها  
فإن أختا لم تملأها قلماً • بؤس بائع حاجة لا يأنف  
كان مع الركب الذين أخذوا بها • غمامة صيف زعرعها شملها

(١) زيادة في ش . (٢) في ش : « قال حدثنا أبو غسان دماذ » . وأبو غسان  
كنية دماذ . انظر صحيفة ١٥٣ حاشية رقم ١ من الجزء الأول من الأغانى . (٣) المنجبة  
في الأصل : الكنة أو النافذة يعطيا صاحبها رجلاً يشرب لبنها ثم يردّها إذا انقطع الحليب . ثم كثر استعماله  
في كل مرهوب . وفي ش « العامرية » بدل « كنية » . (٤) كذلك أغلب الأصول .  
يقال أحميت ماله : استأمله وأفسده ، وماز مسحوت رسمحت أى ذهب . وباحت نجاته :  
خبت وحرمت . ولم نجد في كتب اللغة « تساحت » على وزن قاعز من هذه الناحية وفي ش  
وتزيين الأسواق « ألقاها ماله » وهكذا جاءت في جميع النسخ كما تقدم في ص ٧ من هذا الجزء .



سَخِرْتُ بِمَنْعَى سَيْلِ جَوْشَنَ إِذْ غَلَّوْا . تَحَبُّبُ مُسَرِّقِ التَّحَارِيمِ آفُ  
 بِشَائِبَةِ الْأَحْزَانِ هِجْ شَوْقَهَا . مُجْتَمَعَةُ الْأَلْفِ هِمَّ زِيَالُهَا  
 إِذَا أَلْتَفَتْتَ مِنْ خَلْفِهَا وَهِيَ تَغْتَلِي . بِهَا الْعَيْسُ جَلَّ عِبْرَةُ الْعَيْنِ حَالُهَا  
 أَخْبَرَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ سَلْمَانَ الْأَخْفَشُ قَالَ أُنْشَدَنِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى ثَقَلَبٌ عَنْ  
 أَبِي نَصْرٍ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَتَمٍ قَالَ : وَأُنْشَدَنَاهُ الْمُبَرَّدُ لِلْمَجْنُونِ فَقَالَ :

### صوت

وَأَحْبَسُ عِنْدَكَ النَّفْسَ وَالنَّفْسُ صَبَّةٌ . يَذْكُرُكَ وَتُخْتَلِي بِالسِّكِّ قَرِيبُ  
 عَاقَةِ أَنْ تَسْمِيَ الْوُشَاةَ بِظَنَّةٍ . وَأَحْرَمُكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَرِبَ مُرِيبُ  
 فَقَدْ جَمَلْتُ نَفْسِي - وَأَنْتَ أَجْرَمْتَهُ . وَكُنْتَ أَعَزَّ النَّاسِ - عِنْدَكَ يَطِيبُ  
 فَلَوْ شِئْتُ لَمْ أَغْضَبْ عَلَيْكَ وَلَمْ يَزَلْ . لَكَ الدَّعَرُ مَنَى مَا حَيْثُ نَصِيبُ  
 أَمَّا وَالَّذِي يَتَلَوُّ السَّرَائِرَ كُلَّهَا . وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدِي بِهِ وَتَغِيبُ  
 لَقَدْ كُنْتُ مِنْ تَصْطَفِي النَّفْسَ حُلَّةً . لَهَا دُونَ خُلَايِ الْعَفَاءِ حُجُوبُ

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وه نجد في بلاد العرب ما يسمى جوشن الأجيلا في غربي حلب .  
 وفي ش : « جوشين » وهو مشتق جوش وهو جبل في بلاد بني النقيز بين أذربايجان والبادية ،  
 وفي مع جيل آخرهم يقال له « جدد » فيقال : جوشان ، قال البيت :

تجاذزن من جوشين كل مفازة . ومن سوام في أذينة كالأجل

(٢) كذا في نسخة ب ، ص . وفي باقي النسخ : « والضمر » . (٣) كذا في ش  
 « المخادم » إلخ . المهمة : جمع مخرم وهو الطريق في الجبل أو الرمل . وفي بقية النسخ : « المخادم »  
 بالهال المهمة ولم نجد له معنى صالحا . (٤) في ش وتزيين الأضواء : « بمجلة الأبقان » .  
 (٥) كذا في ش والديوان . وفي سائر النسخ : « تلي السرائر » . (٦) كذا في ش  
 والديوان . وفي باقي النسخ : « بطن الناس » .

ذكر يحيى المكي أنه لابن سريح قيل أولُ، وقال الهشام: إنه من منحول  
يحيى إليه .

أخبرني الحرثي بن أبي العلاء قال حدثني الحسن بن محمد بن طالب النيسابري  
قال حدثني إسحاق الموصلي . وأخبرني به محمد بن مزيد والحسين بن يحيى عن حماد بن  
إسحاق عن أبيه قال حدثني سعيد بن سليمان عن أبي الحسن البغاه قال :

خبرني الحسن  
البغاه والمرأة التي  
أحب صديق له  
من قريش

بيننا أنا وصديق لي من قريش نمتي بالبلاط ليلاً ، إذا بطل نسوة في القمر ،  
فسمعت إحداهن تقول : أهو هو ؟ فقالت لها أخرى معها : إي والله إنه هو هو !  
فدنت مني ثم قالت : يا كهل ، قل لهذا الذي معك :

لبست لبالك في خايج <sup>(١)</sup> بعائدة \* كما عهدت ولا أيام ذي سلم

فقلت : أجب فقد سمعت ، فقال : قد والله قُطِعَ بي وأُرتج على فأجب عني ، فقلت :

فقلت لها يا عز كل مصيبة \* إذا وطئت يوماً لها النفس ذلت

ثم مضينا حتى إذا كنا بمفرق طريقين مضى التقي إلى منزله ومضيت إلى منزلي ،  
فإذا أنا بجويرة تجذب ردائي فالتفت ، فقالت لي : المرأة التي كلمتها تدعوك ،  
فمضيت معها حتى دخلت داراً واسعة ثم صرْتُ إلى بيت فيه حصير ، وقد ثنت لي  
وسادة فجلسْتُ عليها ، ثم جاءت جارية بوسادة مثنية فطرحتها ، ثم جاءت المرأة  
فجلسْتُ عليها ، فقالت لي : أنت انجيب ؟ قلت : نعم ، قالت : ما كان أفضَّ جوابك

(١) كذا في أغلب النسخ وفي س ، ح « الحسين بن محمد » . (٢) البلاط : ضرب  
من المجازة تفرش به الأرض ثم سمي المكان بلاطاً تشابهاً ، وهو معروف بالهيئة وقد تكرر ذكره  
في الأحاديث . انظر النهاية لابن الأثير في مادة « بَطَط » . (٣) كذا في س بالتكثير .  
وفي باقي النسخ : « الأخرى » . (٤) كذا في س ، د . وفي سائر النسخ : « جمع »  
وجمع هو المدقة . (٥) هذه الكلمة ساقطة من س ، د .

وأغلفه ! قتل لها : ما حضرنى غيره، فكنت : ثم قالت : لا، والله ما خلق الله خلقاً أحب إلى من إنسان كان معك ! قتل لها : أنا الضامن لك عنه ما تحبين ، فقالت : هيات أن يقع بذلك وفاء ، قتل : أنا الضامن وعلى أن آتيك به في الليلة القابلة فانصرفت ، فإذا ألتقي بياي ، قتل : ما جاء بك ؟ قال : ظننت أنها سترسل إليك وسألت عنك فلم أعرفك خبراً ، فظننت أنك عندها ، فخلست أنتظرك ، قتل له : وقد كان الذي ظننت ، وقد وعدتها أن آتيك فامضى بك إليها في الليلة المقبلة ، فلما أصبحنا تبياناً وانتظرنا المساء ، فلما جاء الليل رحلنا إليها ، فإذا الجارية متظرة لنا ، فمضت أمامنا حين رأتنا حتى دخلت تلك الدار ودخلنا معها ، فإذا راحة طيبة ومجلس قد أعد وتضد ، فجلسنا على وسائد قد تئنت (١) ، وجلست ملياً ثم أقبلت عليه فعاتبته ملياً ثم قالت :

### صوت

وأنت الذي أختفى ما وعدتني • وأنت بي من كان فيك يلوم  
وأبرزتني للناس ثم تركتني • لم غرضاً أرمى وأنت سليم  
فلو كان قولكم الجلد قد بدا • يجلدى من قول الوشاة كلوم

هذه الأبيات لأمية امرأة ابن الدمينه ، وفيها غناء لإبراهيم الموصلي ذكره إسحاق ولم يُحِثَّه . وقال الهشام : هو خفيف رمل . وفيه لعريب خفيف ثيل أول يُنسب إلى حاكم الوادي وإلى يعقوب . قال : ثم سكنت وسكت الفتى حنية ثم قال :  
غدرت ولم أغدر وخنت ولم أخن • وفي بعض هذا للحب عزاء  
جزيتك ضعفت الود ثم صرمتني • فبك من قلبك إليك أداء

(١) زيادة في • (٢) كذا في • « لامية » وهو الخواص لما ساقى في ترجمة

ابن الدمينه في ج ١٥ ص ١٥١ أغاني طبع بولاق . وفي باقي النسخ : « لامة » وهو تحريف .

فالتفت إلى قات : ألا تسمع ما يقول ! قد خبرتك ، فغمزته أن كُفْ  
فكُفْ ، ثم أقبلت عليه وقالت :

### صوت

تجاهلت وصلي حين جئت عمايني • فهلا صرمت الجبل إذ أنا أبصر  
ولى من قوى الجبل الذى قد قطعته • نصيبٌ وإذ رأى جميع مؤقر  
ولكنما آذنت بالعرس بقتة • ولست على مثل الذى جئت أقدر

— الفناء لإبراهيم تقيّل أول بالوسطى عن عمرو — فقال :

لقد جعلت نسي - وأنت أجترته • وكنت أعز الناس - عليك تطيب

قال : فبكت ، ثم قالت : أو قد طابت نفسك ! لا ، والله ما فيك بعدها خير ،  
ثم آثنت إلى وقالت : قد علمت أنك لا تقي بضائك ولا يقي به عك . وهذا  
البيت الأخير للمجنون ، وإنما ذكر هذا الخبر هنا وليس من أخبار المجنون لذكره فيه .

### رجع الخبر إلى سِياقة أخبار المجنون

أخبرني عمي قال حدثنا الكزائي عن العُمري عن الهيثم بن عدي أن رخط  
المجنون اجتازوا في نجمة<sup>(٢)</sup> لم يحيى ليل ، وقد جمعهم نجمة فرأى أبيات أهل ليل ولم  
يُقدم على الإسلام بهم وعدل أهل إلى جنة أخرى ، فقال المجنون :

رأى المجنون  
أبيات أهل ليل  
فقال شعرا

(١) كذا في جميع النسخ ، يقال : جَذَ به الأمر أى اشتد . وفي ش : « لبت » وهو من

لَجَّ به الشيء : لزمه وأبى أن يصرف عنه . (٢) النجمة عند العرب : القهظ في طلب الكلا

والغشب في موضعه . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : « بقدر » .

عمرُك يا ليتَ تَقِيلُ <sup>(١)</sup> التَّوَى . مررتُ ولم أَلِمَّ عِيبَهُ أَشَقُّ  
وبالْخَرْجِ مِنْ أَعْلَى الْجَبَةِ مَرَّتُ . <sup>(٢)</sup> تَجِبَ حَرْنُ صَدْرِي بِهِ مُنْضَاقُ  
كَأَنِّي إِذَا لَمْ أَلْقِ بِسِلِّ مُعْتَقُ . <sup>(٣)</sup> بَيْنَ أَهْوَائِ تَبَدُّلٍ وَحَاقِ  
عَلَى أُنْحَى لَوْ شِئْتُ حَاجَتُ صَبَاحِي . <sup>(٤)</sup> عَلَى رِسْوَمٍ عَنِ نَيْبِهَا التَّنَاطُقُ  
لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّ أَحَبَّ يَأْمٍ مَالِكٍ . <sup>(٥)</sup> بِقَلْبِي بِرَأْيِ اللَّهِ مِنْهُ لَلْإِصْقُ  
بَضْمٌ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ أَطْرَافَ حُكْمٍ . <sup>(٦)</sup> كَمَا ضَمَّ أَطْرَافَ التَّصْبِيحِ النَّسَائِقُ

### صورت

ومادا عسى الواشون أن يتحدثوا . سوي أن يقولوا إني لك عاشق  
نعم صدق الواشون أنت حبيبة . إني وإن لم تصف منك الخلاق  
الغناء لستم تقيلاً أوّل من جامعها . وفيه لدعاة رمل عن حبش .

حديث نيزع  
جارية لها من  
عجل

أخبرني أحمد بن جعفر بحفظه قال حدثني أحمد بن الطيّب قال قال ابن  
الكلبي : دخلتُ ليل على جارية لها من عجل وفي يدها منونته تسالك به ، فنظّفت  
ثم قالت : سئى الله من أهدى لي هذا المنونته ، فقالت لها جاريتها : مَنْ هو ؟  
قالت : قيس بن الملقح . وبكت ثم تزعّت شيئاً ففعلُ با فقالت : ويحه ! لقد

- (١) التقيّل : الناحية . وفي ش : « ما تظاهر الذي » والتظاهر يضيق عن المكان المرتفع ،  
فيقال : ضواهر الأرض أي أشرافها وأعلىها . (٢) الخرج : مرجع الوادي وسفحه .  
(٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش : « الجبة » وفي ياقوت الجبة : روضة نخدية بين ضربة  
وحين هي يربوع وأنها محرواء بالجماعة أيضا . ولم نجد الجبة إلا موضع خاص ولعله تصغير جبة بمعنى الناحية .  
(٤) السب : الجبل كالتب أي يذهب في الهواء . (٥) أهو : يذهب في الهواء .  
(٦) الحائق : الجبل المرتفع وفي هذا البيت إتياء وهو اختلاف حركة الراء . (٧) كذا في ش .  
وفي أغلب النسخ : « ومن » بالواو .

عَلَيْ مَنِي مَا أَهْلَكَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ أَسْتَحِقَّ ذَلِكَ، فَتَشَدُّكَ اللَّهُ، أَصَدَقَ فِي صَفِيٍّ أَمْ  
كَذَبَ؟ فَقَالَتْ : لَا وَاللَّهِ، بَلِ صَدَقَ، قَالَ : وَيْلَ الْمَجْنُونِ قَوْلُهَا فَبَكَى ثُمَّ أَتَانَا يَقُولُ :

نُبِّئْتُ لَيْلَى وَقَدْ كُنَّا نَخْلَعُهَا <sup>(١)</sup> . قَالَتْ سَقِ الْمَرْءُ غَيْثًا مَرَّتِلَا خَرِبًا  
وَجَبْدًا رَاكِبٌ كُنَّا نَهْشُ بِهِ . يُهْدِي لَنَا مِنْ أَرَاكِ الْمَوْسِمَ الْقُضْبَا  
قَالَتْ لِجَارَتِهَا يَوْمًا نُسَائِلُهَا <sup>(٢)</sup> . لَمَّا أَسْحَمَتْ وَأَلْقَتْ عِنْدَهَا اللَّبَا  
بِاعْتِمَارِكَ اللَّهِ <sup>(٣)</sup> أَلَّا قُلْتُ صَادَقَةً . أَصَدَقْتُ بِسَفَةِ الْمَجْنُونِ أَمْ كَذَبًا

ويروى : "تشدُّك الله" ويروى : "أصادقًا وصفَ المجنونُ أم كذبًا" .

وقال أبو نصر في أخباره : لما زُوِّجَتْ لَيْلَى بِالرَّجُلِ التَّفَنَّى سَمِعَ الْمَجْنُونُ رَجُلًا  
مِنْ قَوْمِهَا يَقُولُ لِآخَرٍ : أَنْتَ مِنْ يُسَيِّعُ لَيْلَى؟ قَالَ : وَمَتَى تَخْرُجُ؟ قَالَ : غَدًا،  
صَحْوَةً أَوْ اللَّيْلَةَ، فَبَكَى [ الْمَجْنُونُ ] <sup>(٤)</sup> ثُمَّ قَالَ :

سمع المجنون بخروج  
لَيْلَى مِنْ زَوْجِهَا  
فَقَالَ شِعْرًا

### صوت

كَأَنَّ الْقَلْبَ لَيْلَةً قَبْلَ يُغْدَى . يَلِيلُ الْعَامِرِيَّةِ أَوْ يُرْلَحُ  
فَطَنَةٌ عَزَّهَا شَرِّكَ فَبَاتَتْ . تُجَاذِبُهُ وَقَدْ عَلِقَ الْجَنَاحُ

الفناء لبحي المكي خفيفٌ قَبِيلٌ بِالْوَسْطَى عَنْ عَمْرٍو . وَفِيهِ رَمَلٌ يَنْسَبُ إِلَى  
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِلَى أَحْمَدَ بْنِ بَحْيٍ الْمَكِّيِّ، وَقَالَ حَبَشٌ : فِيهِ خَفِيفٌ قَبِيلٌ [ بِالْوَسْطَى ]  
لَسْلِيمٌ .

(١) فِي ت : «سَوَّاهُ مِنْ مَرَّتِلَا جَدْبًا» . وَفِي تَرْبِيعِ الْأَسْرَاقِ : «قَالَتْ سَقِ اللَّهَ مِنْ مَرَّتِلَا خَرِبًا» .

(٢) الْقَبْ : كُلُّ مَا عَلَى الْأَسَانِ مِنَ الثِّيَابِ . (٣) أَلَّا هَذَا لِلتَّخْفِيفِ بِمَعْنَى هَلَّا .

(٤) زِيَادَةُ فِي ت .

وقال النسيم بن عدى في خبره: حدثني عبد الله بن عياش الحمداًنى<sup>(١)</sup> قال حدثني رجل من بني عامر قال: مُطَرْنَا مَطَرًا شَدِيدًا فِي ربيعِ أَرْبَعَاءَهُ، وَدَامَ الْمَطَرُ ثَلَاثًا ثُمَّ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي الْيَوْمِ الرَّابِعِ عَلَى صَحْوٍ وَخَرَجَ النَّاسُ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْوَادِي، فَرَأَيْتُ رَجُلًا جَالِسًا حَجْرَةً وَحَدَّهُ قَصَصْدُهُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ الْمَجْنُونُ جَالِسٌ وَحَدَّهُ يَبْكِي فَوْعْظُهُ وَكَلَمَتُهُ طَوِيلًا وَهُوَ سَاكِتٌ لَمْ يَرْفَعْ رَأْسَهُ إِلَى، ثُمَّ أَتَشَدَّنِي بِصَوْتٍ حَزِينٍ لَا أَنْسَاهُ أَبَدًا وَحَرَقْتُهُ:

## صوت

جَرَى السَّيْلُ فَسَبَكَانِي السَّيْلُ إِذْ جَرَى • وَفَاضَتْ لَهُ مِنْ مُقَلَّتِي غُرُوبُ<sup>(٢)</sup>  
وَمَا ذَاكَ إِلَّا حِينَ أَقْبَنْتُ أَنَّهُ • يَكُونُ بِوَادِيَاتٍ فِيهِ قَرِيبُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
يَكُونُ تُجَابًا دُونَكُمْ فَإِذَا أَتَيْتُ • إِلَيْكُمْ تَلَقَّى طَيْبُكُمْ فَيْطِيبُ  
أَفْضَلُ غَرِيبٍ الدَّارِ فِي أَرْضِ عَامِرٍ • إِلَّا كُلُّ مَهْجُورٍ هُنَاكَ غَرِيبُ  
وَإِنَّ الْكَيْبَ الْبَرْدَ مِنْ أَيْمَنِ الْحَمَى • إِلَيَّ وَإِنْ لَمْ أَنَسْهِ حَلِيبُ  
فَلَا خَيْرَ فِي الدُّنْيَا إِذَا أَنْتَ لَمْ تَزُرْ • حَيًّا وَلَمْ يَطْرُبْ إِلَيْكَ حَيْبُ  
وَأَوَّلُ هَذِهِ الْقَصِيدَةِ - وَفِيهِ أَيْضًا غَنَاءٌ - :

## صوت

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الْيَتُّ الَّذِي لَا أَرْوِدُهُ • وَجِجْرَانُهُ مَنَى إِلَيْهِ دُنُوبُ  
هَجَرَتُكَ مَشَاقًا وَزَرَّتْكَ خَائِفًا • وَفِيكَ عَلَى الدَّمْرِ مِنْكَ رَقِيبُ<sup>(٤)</sup>  
سَأَسْتَعِظُ الْأَيَّامَ فَيْسُكَ لَعْلَهَا • بِسُومٍ سُرُورٍ فِي هَوَاكَ تُثِيبُ

- (١) كَذَا فِي أَظْهَرِ النَّسخِ . وَفِي ش : «عبد الله بن عياش الحمداني» . (٢) حَجْرَةٌ : قَابِضَةٌ .  
(٣) كَذَا فِي أَظْهَرِ النَّسخِ . وَفِي ب ، س ، ح : «جَرَى الدَّمْعُ فَسَبَكَانِي السَّيْلُ» وَهُوَ تَحْرِيفٌ .  
(٤) الْغُرُوبُ : جَمْعُ غَرَبٍ وَهُوَ تَمَعُّعٌ . (٥) فِي ش وَتَرْبِيعِ الْأَسْوَاقِ : «مَع» .  
(٦) كَذَا فِي ش وَتَرْبِيعِ الْأَسْوَاقِ . وَفِي بَاقِي النَّسخِ : «وَفِيَّ عَلَيْكَ الدَّمْرُ مِنْكَ رَقِيبٌ» .

هذه الأبيات في شعر محمد بن أبيه مَرْوِيَّةٌ<sup>(١)</sup> ، وَرُوِيَتْ هَا هُنَا لِلْمَجْنُونِ  
[ في هذه القصيدة<sup>(٢)</sup> . وفيها تَعَرِيبٌ ثَقِيلٌ أَوَّلُ . ولَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ ثَانِي ثَقِيلٌ .  
ولأحمد بن المكي خَفِيفٌ ثَقِيلٌ :

وَأَفْرِدْتُ إِفْرَادَ الطَّيْرِ دُونَ الْبَاسِ حَاجَاتٌ وَهِيَ قَرِيبُ<sup>(٣)</sup>  
لِئِنْ حَالَ يَأْسٌ دُونَ لَيْلٍ لَرُبَّمَا<sup>(٤)</sup> . أَتَى الْيَأْسُ دُونَ الْأَمْرِ فَهُوَ عَصِيبُ<sup>(٥)</sup>  
وَمَنِّتِي حَتَّى إِذَا مَا رَأَيْتَنِي . عَلَى شَرَفٍ لِلنَّاطِرِينَ يُرِيبُ<sup>(٦)</sup>  
صَدَدَتِ وَأَشَتَّ الْعَدُوَّ بِصُرْمِنَا . أَتَأْكِلُ بِالْبَيْلِ الْجَزَاءَ مُثِيبُ

أخبرني هاشم بن محمد الخزازي قال حدثنا محمد بن زكريا القلابي قال حدثنا  
مهدي بن سابق قال حدثنا بعض مشايخ بني عامر أن المجنون مر في توحشه  
فصادف حتى ليلي راحلاً ولقيها فجأة فعرفها وعرفته فصمق وخر مغشياً على وجهه ،  
وأقبل فياناً من حتى ليل فأخذوه ومسحوا التراب عن وجهه ، وأستدوه إلى صدورهم  
وسألوا ليلي أن يقف له وقفةً ، فقامت ليلي كأنه به ، وقالت : أما هذا فلا يجوز أن  
أفصح به ، ولكن يا فلانة - لامية هذا - اذهبي إلى قيس فتقولي له : ليلي تقرأ عليك  
السلام ، وتقول لك : أعزز علي بما أنت فيه ، ولو وجدت سبيلاً إلى شفاء دائمك  
لوقيتك بنفسي منه ، فمضت الوليدة إليه وأخبرته بقولها ، فأفاق وجلس وقال : أبلغها

لقاؤه في نوحته  
ليل فجاء وشعره  
في ذلك

(١) كذا وقعت هذه العبارة في أغلب النسخ . وفي نسخة مانه : « هذان البيتان الأولان في شعر  
محمد بن أبيه مدحونان » . وقد رجع صاحب تزيين الأسواق : أن البيت الأول للمجنون وأن الثاني  
والثالث لبيته . (٢) زيادة في نسخة . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ  
وفي نسخة وتزيين الأسواق : « لئن حال يأس » . (٤) كذا في تزيين الأسواق .  
وقد ورد في جميع الأصول : « أتى اليأس دون الأمر وهو قريب » . وهذه الرواية يكون فيه الإبطاء .  
وهو تكرير للقافية مع اتحاد المعنى .



السلام وفوق هذا : هيهات ! إن دنى ودوائى أيت . وإن حيتى ووفى نقي يدبك .  
و وكنت بنى شقاء لازما وبلاء طويلا . ثم بكى وأنتا يقول :

أقول لأصحابى هى الشمس ضياءها • قسرب<sup>(١)</sup> ولكن فى تناولها بعد  
لقد عارضنا<sup>(٢)</sup> الريح منها بشفعة • على كيدى من طيب أرواحها رد  
فما زلت متشيا على وقد مضت • أناة<sup>(٣)</sup> وما عندى جواب ولا رد  
أقلب بالأيدى وأهلى يسولة<sup>(٤)</sup> • يقدونى لو يستطيعون أن يقدوا  
ولم يبق إلا الجسد والعظم عاريا • ولا عظم لى إن دام ما بى ولا جلد  
أدنى ما فى انقطاعى وغربى • إليك ثواب منىك دين ولا تقد  
عدينى - بنفى أيت - وعدا فرجا • جلا كربة المكروب عن قلبه الوعد  
وقد يسل قوم ولا كيتى • ولا مثل جدى<sup>(٥)</sup> فى الشقاء بكم جد  
غزنى جنود الحب من كل جانب • إذا حان من جند قول<sup>(٦)</sup> أنى جند  
وقال أبو نصر أحمد بن حاتم : كان أبو عمرو المدنى يقول قال نوقل بن مساحق :  
أخبرت عن المجنون أن سبب توحشه أنه كان يوما يصرية جالس وحده إذا ناداه  
مناد من الجبل :

كَلَانَا يَا أُنَى يُحِبُّ لَيْلَى • بِنَى وَفِيكَ مِنْ لَيْلَى الترابُ

- (١) كذا فى أغلب النسخ . وفى ت : • • • • •  
(٢) أناة : انتظار . (٣) العوة كقول : رفع صوت بالبحر . (٤) كذا فى ت  
وترين الأسواق . وفى سائر النسخ : « ودغى » . (٥) الجدة بالفتح : الحظ والنصيب .  
(٦) اتقول : رجوع الجند بعد الغزو . (٧) كذا فى أغلب الأصول . وفى ت :  
« قال ابن عمر المرمى » .

لقد خبت فؤادك ثم ثنت \* بقلي فهو مهموم مصاب<sup>(١)</sup>  
شركك في هوى من ليس تبدي \* لنا الأيام منه سوى اجتناب<sup>(٢)</sup>

قال : فتنفس السعداء وغشي عليه ، وكان هذا سبب توحشه فلم ير له أثر حتى وجده نوفل بن ماضي . قال نوفل : قيس البادية فسألت عنه ، فقيل لي : فوشى وما لنا به عهد ولا تدرى إلى أين صار ، فخرجت يوما أتصيد الأروى<sup>(٣)</sup> ، وصي جماعة من أصحابي ، حتى إذا كنت بناحية الجي إذا نحن بأراكة عظيمة قد بدا منها قطع من الظباء ، فيها شخص إنسان يرى من خلل تلك الأراكة ، فحجب أصحابي من ذلك ، فمرته وأبته وعرفت أنه المجنون الذي أخبرت عنه ، فزلت عن دأبي وتخفت من نياي ونرجحت أمني رويدا حتى أتيت الأراكة فارتقيت حتى صرت على أعلامها وأشرفت عليه وعلى الظباء ، فإذا به وقد تدلى الشعر على وجهه ، فلم أكد أمره إلا بتأمل شديد ، وهو يرتبي في ثمر تلك الأراكة ، فرفع رأسه فتمثلت بييت من شعره :

أتبكي على ليلى ونفك باعدت \* مزارك من ليلى وشعبا كما معا<sup>(٤)</sup>  
قال : فقربت الظباء ، وأندفع في باقي القصيدة ينشد لها ، فأنسى حسن نغمته وحسن صوته وهو يقول :

(١) كذا في جميع النسخ . وفيه تقواء وهو اختلاف حركة اررى بازفع أو اجز . وقد تقدم البيتان الأولان في ص ٧ من هذا الجزء ونهتبا هكذا :

شركك في هوى من كان حفي \* وحكك من مودتها المسذاب

(٢) الأروى : الوعول وهي تيوس الجبل واحدة أروية . (٣) الأراكة : واحدة الأراك وهو

شجر كثير الورق والأغصان ينبت بالغور تحفه المساويك . انظر انسان مادة أرك . (٤) أي نزلت

شجانها . (٥) في س : « إلا بعد تأمل شديد » . (٦) كذا في جميع الأصول .

وفي ترجمة الصفة الشبزي في ج ٥ ص ١٣٣ أغاني صبح يولاق : « حنت الى ربا » .

عبر نوفل  
ابن ماضي مع  
المجسود

فما حَسَنُ أَنْ تَتَى الْأَمْرَ طَائِعًا . وَتَجْتَزَّعَ أَنْ دَاعَى النَّصِيَاةِ أَسَمًا  
بَكَتْ عَيْنِي الْبُسرَى فَلَمَّا ذُجِرْتُهَا . عَنْ الْجَبَلِ بَعْدَ الْحَلَمِ اسْبِتًا مَعًا  
وَأَذْكُرُ أَيَّامَ الْجَنَى ثُمَّ أَتُسْنِي . عَلَى كَيْدِي مِنْ خَشْيَةٍ أَنْ تَصْدَعًا  
فَلَيْسَتْ خَشْيَتُ الْجَنَى بِرَوَاجِعٍ . عَلَيْكَ وَلَكِنْ خَلَّ عَيْنِكَ تَدَمُّعًا<sup>(٢)</sup>  
مَعَى كُلِّ غَرٍّ قَدْ عَفَى عَادِلَاتِهِ . بِوَصْلِ الْغَوَايِ مِنْ لَدُنْ أَنْ تَرَعَرَعَ  
إِذَا رَاحَ يَبْشَى فِي الرِّدَائِينَ أَسْرَعَتْ . إِلَيْهِ الْعَبَسُونَ النَّاطِرَاتُ الطَّلُوعُ

قال : ثم سقط مغشيًا عليه . فتمثنت بقوله :

يَا دَارَ لَيْلٍ بِسِفْطِ الْحَيِّ قَدْ دَرَسَتْ . إِلَّا التَّثَامُ<sup>(٣)</sup> وَالْأَمَوقُ قَدْ التَّارَ<sup>(٤)</sup>  
- مَا نَفَثَا الدَّهْرَ مِنْ لَيْلٍ تَمُوتُ كَذَا . فِي مَوْقِفٍ وَقَفْتُهُ أَوْ عَلَى دَارِ  
- أَبْلَى عِظَامِكَ بَعْدَ اللَّحْمِ ذِكْرُ كَهْنَا . كَمَا يُنْحَتُ قِذْحُ الشُّوْحِطِ الْبَارِي<sup>(٥)</sup>  
فَرَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ إِلَى وَقَالَ : مَنْ أَنْتَ حَبَالِكُ اللَّهُ؟ فَقُلْتُ : أَنَا نَوْفَلُ بْنُ مُسَاحِقٍ ،  
حَبَابِي قُلْتُ لَهُ : مَا أَحَدَثْتَ بَعْدِي فِي بَيْتِكَ مِنْهَا؟ فَأَنْشَدَنِي يَقُولُ :

- (١) كَذَا فِي أَغْطِ السَّحَابِ وَدِيَانِ الْخَمَاسَةِ . وَفِي شِئْنٍ وَتَرْبِيعِ الْأَسْرِ : « الْبَيْتِ » .  
(٢) هَذَا الْبَيْتُ وَالْأَيَّامُ الْأَرْبَعَةُ قَدْ أُورِدَهَا الْمُؤَلِّفُ عَلَى هَذَا التَّرْتِيبِ فِي تَرْجُمَةِ نَصَةِ التَّشِيرِيِّ عَلَى أَنَّهَا  
نَصَةُ ثُمَّ قَالَ : وَهَذِهِ الْأَيَّامُ تُرْوَى لِقَبْلِ بْنِ ذَرِيحٍ وَيُرْوَى بِعَصَا لُجَيْنٍ ، وَالصَّحِيحُ فِي الْبَيْتَيْنِ الْأَوَّلَيْنِ  
أَنَّهَا لِقَبْلِ بْنِ ذَرِيحٍ وَرَوَاهُ أَيْضًا أُنْثِيَتْ وَقَدْ تَوَاتَرَتْ الرِّوَايَاتُ بِأَنَّهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنْ عَصَا طَرِيقٍ ، وَأَنَّهَا مَشْكُوكَةٌ لِقَبْلِ  
أَهْلِ لُجَيْنٍ أَوْ لِقَبْلِ نَصَةِ . وَتُرْوَدُ أَيْضًا عَلَى تَقَالُفِ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامُ الْخَمْسَةِ فِي جِهَةِ آيَاتِ نَسَبِ الْإِسْمَةِ التَّشِيرِيِّ .  
أَنْتَ رَجُلٌ ١ ص ١٩٠ أَمَّا الْخَالِي ضِعْ دَارِ السَّكَنِ الْمَصْرِيَّةِ . (٣) السَّفْطُ مَثَلُ السَّيْلِ : حَيْثُ  
انْقَطَعَ مَعْقِرُ الرَّمْلِ وَرَقَى . (٤) التَّثَامُ : نَمَتْ فِي الْبَادِيَةِ ، كَانَ الْعَرَبُ يَسْتَوْنُ بِهِ خِفَاصَ  
الْبُيُوتِ ، وَهُوَ مِنْ نَبَاتِ السَّيْلِ لَا يَقُولُ . وَهَذَا كَانُوا يَقُولُونَ لِقَبْلِ لَا يَسِرُّ تَارَهُ : « هُوَ عَلَى  
طَرَفِ التَّثَامِ » . (٥) كَذَا فِي جَمِيعِ الْأَصُولِ ، وَهَذَا نَجْدٌ فِي كَتَبِ الْعِلْمِ الَّتِي بِأَيْدِيهَا « نَحْتُ »  
هَكَذَا مُضَعَّفًا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْمَثَلَةِ . وَلَعَلَّهَا بَحْتٌ ، يُقَالُ : نَحَبْتُ الشَّجَرَةَ وَبَعْدَ إِذَا قُتِرَ . عِيسَى مِنَ الْهَاءِ .  
(٦) الْقِدْحُ : السَّحَابُ . وَالشُّوْحِطُ : ضَرِبٌ مِنَ الشَّيْءِ تَخْلَعُ بِهِ النَّفْسُ ، وَهُوَ مِنْ أَشْجَارِ الْجِبَالِ .

أَلَا حُجِيتَ لَيْلٍ وَآتَى أَمِيرُهَا • عَنِّي يَبْنِي جَاهِدًا لَا أَرْوُّهَا  
وَأَوْعَدَنِي فِيهَا رَجُلٌ أَبُومُ • أَبِي وَأَبُوهَا خُشِّنَتْ لِي صُدُورُهَا  
عَلَى غَيْرِ جُرْمٍ غَيْرَ أَنِّي أَحِبُّهَا • وَأَنْتَ قَوَادِي رَحْمَتُهَا وَأَسِيرُهَا  
قال : ثم سَمَحْتُ لَهُ طِبَاءُ قَقَامٍ يَعدُو فِي أَثَرِهَا حَتَّى لَحِقَهَا فَمَضَى مَعَهَا .

حَدَّثَنِي الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي سَعْدٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ  
الصَّبَّاحِ عَنْ أَبِيهِ الْكَلْبِيِّ قَالَ : لَمَّا قَالَ مَجْنُونٌ بَنِي عُمَرَ :

قَضَاهَا لَغَيْرِي وَأَبْتَلَانِي بِحَبِّهَا • فَبَلَا بَنِيَّ غَيْرَ لَيْلٍ أَبْتَلَانِيَا  
نُودِي فِي اللَّيْلِ : أَنْتَ الْمُنْخَطَطُ لِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَعْرُضُ فِي أَحْكَامِهِ ! وَأَخْلَسَ عَقْلُهُ  
فَنَوَحَشَ مِنْذُ تِلْكَ اللَّيْلَةِ وَذَهَبَ مَعَ الْوَحْشِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ • وَهَذِهِ الْقَصِيدَةُ الَّتِي قَالَ  
فِيهَا هَذَا الْبَيْتَ مِنْ أَشْهُرِ أَشْعَارِهِ ، وَالصَّوْتُ الْمَذْكُورُ بِذِكْرِ أَخْبَارِ الْمُجَنُّونِ هَا هُنَا  
مِنْهَا . وَفِيهَا أَيْضًا عِدَّةُ آيَاتٍ يُغْنِي فِيهَا ، مِنْ ذَلِكَ :

### صَوْت

أَعُدُّ اللَّيَالِي لَيْلَةً بَعْدَ لَيْلَةٍ • وَقَدْ عَشْتُ دَهْرًا لَا أَعُدُّ اللَّيَالِيَا  
أَرَانِي إِذَا صَلَبْتُ يَمُتُّ نَحْوَهَا • يُوَجِّهِي وَإِنْ كَانَ الْمَصْلَى وَرَائِيَا  
وَمَا بِي إِشْرَاكَ وَلَكِنْ حُبًّا • كَعُودِ الشَّجَرِ أَعْيَا النَّضِيبِ الْمُدَاوِيَا  
أَحِبُّ مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ مَا وَاقَقَ أَسْمَهَا • وَأَشْبَهَهُ أَوْ كَانَ مِنْهُ مُدَايَا  
فِي هَذِهِ الْأَبْيَاتِ هَزَجٌ خَفِيفٌ لِمَعَانٍ مَعْرُوفٍ :

نصبت له الثانية

(١) فِي ش : « كَثَر » . (٢) كَذَا فِي ب . س . ح . وَفِي بَاقِي النُّسخِ هَكَذَا :  
« نَسَا » بدون عَيْنٍ بَعْدَ الْأَلِفِ ، وَلَمْ يَهْتَدِ إِلَى تَصْحِيحِ هَذِهِ التَّكْمَةِ وَاتَّقَى بِمَدِّهَا .

## صوت

وخبرتني أنت تيماء متزلزلة . الليل إذا ما تصفأ ألقي المراسبا  
فهذه شهرة الصيف عني قد آتقت<sup>(١)</sup> . فالتشوى تزيي ليل المراسبا  
في هذين اليتين لحن من الرمل صنعته عجوز عمير الباذغيسي على لحن إسماعيل :  
« أماوي إن المال غادر ورائع »

وله حديث قد ذكر في أخبار إسماعيل . وهذا اللحن إلى الآن يفتى ، لأنه أشهر  
في أيدي الناس ، وإنما هو لحن إسماعيل أخذ بفعل على هذه الأبيات وكيد بذلك :

## صوت

فلو كان واثق بالجمامة يثبه . وداري بأعلى حصر موت أهدى ليا<sup>(٢)</sup>  
وماذا لهم . لا أحسن الله حالهم . من الحظ في تصرف ليل جبال<sup>(٣)</sup>  
فأنت التي إن شئت أشقيت عيشي . وإن شئت بعد الله أنعمت باليا<sup>(٤)</sup>  
وأنت التي ما من صديق ولا عدو . يرى نضرو ما أبقيت إلا رقي ليا<sup>(٥)</sup>

- (١) في ش وتزيين الأسواق والديوان : « عا » . (٢) نسبة إلى « باذغيس »  
بالعين المعجمة وهي ناحية تشتمل على قرى من أعمال هراة ومرور الزردة . انظر معجم ياقوت .  
(٣) كذا في جميع الأصول . والتعويرون يروونه كما جاء في ديوانه هكذا :  
ولو أنت واثق بالجمامة داره . وداري بأعلى حصر موت أهدى ليا  
ويستشهدون به على أن من العرب من يسكن الباء من الاسم المقصور في حالة النصب . انظر شرح  
الأشعرى في باب العرب والميتي . (٤) كذا في الديوان وتزيين الأسواق . وفي جميع النسخ :  
« حفظهم » . (٥) كذا في ش والديوان وتزيين الأسواق ، وفي باقي النسخ : « القى »  
وهو مخرب . أصل الصور : المهزول من الدواب ويطلق على الميل من الثياب وقد  
يشتمل في الإنسان . ويريد الشاعر قد جسه الذي أنشأه الحب وأملاه .

أَمْضُوبَةٌ لِيَلَى عَلَى أَنْ أَرْوَرَهَا • وَمَتَّعْتُ ذَنْبًا لَهَا أَنْ تَرَانِيَا  
 إِذَا سِرْتُ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْقَضَاءِ رَابِئِي • أَصَانِعُ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَمِيلَ حِيَالِيَا  
 يَمِينًا إِذَا كَانَتْ يَمِينًا وَإِنْ تَكُنْ • شِمَالًا يُنَازِعُنِي الْمَوِيَّ عَنْ شِمَالِيَا  
 أَحِبُّ مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ مَا وَافَقَ أَسْمَاءُ • وَأَشْبَهُهُ أَوْ كَانَ مِنْهُ مُدَانِيَا  
 هِيَ السَّحْرُ إِلَّا أَنْ السَّحْرُ رُقِيَّةٌ • وَإِنِّي لَا أَتْلُو لَهَا الدَّمْعَ رَاقِيَا  
 وَأُنْشِدُ أَبُو نَصِيرٍ لِلْجَنُونَ فِيهِ غَنَاءُ :

### صوت

تَكَادُ يَدِي تَسْدَى إِذَا مَا لَمَسْتُهَا • وَيَنْبُتُ فِي أَطْرَافِهَا الْوَرَقُ الْخُضْرُ  
 أَبِي الْقَلْبُ إِلَّا حُبًّا عَامِرِيَّةً • لَهَا كُنْيَةٌ عَمْرُو وَلَيْسَ لَهَا عَمْرُو  
 الْغَنَاءُ لَعَرِيبَ نَقِيلٍ أَوَّلُ، وَذَكَرَ الْمَشَامِيَّ أَنْ فِيهِ لِإِسْحَاقَ خَفِيفٌ ثَقِيلُ •

رثاه لايه

أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مَرْزُوقٍ بْنِ أَبِي الْأَزْهَرِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا حَمَادُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ  
 عَنْ الْحَيْثَمِ بْنِ عَدِيٍّ قَالَ : أُنْشِدَنِي جَمَاعَةٌ مِنْ بَنِي عُقَيْلٍ لِلْجَنُونَ رِثَى أَبَاهُ، وَمَاتَ قَبْلَ  
 اخْتِلَاطِهِ وَتَوَحَّشَهُ، فَفَقَرَ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ وَرثَاهُ بِهَذِهِ الْأَبْيَاتِ :

عَقَرْتُ عَلَى قَبْرِ الْمُسْتَوَحِّ نَاقِي • بِدَى السَّرْجِ لَمَّا أَنْ جَفَنَتْهُ أَقَارِبُهُ  
 وَقُلْتُ لَهَا كُونِي خَيْرًا فَوَاتِي • غَدَاةَ غَدٍ مَائِسٍ وَبِالْأَمْسِ رَاكِبُهُ

(١) كَذَا فِي الدِّيَّانِ وَتَرْبِيعِ الْأَسْرَاقِ • وَفِي جَمِيعِ النُّسخِ « أَصَانِعُ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَمِيلَ حِيَالِيَا » • وَتَنْظُرُ  
 فَيَأْتِيَتْهُمُ ص ٥٤ حَاشِيَةٌ رَقْمُ ٣ مِنْ هَذَا الْجُزْءِ •  
 (٢) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخِ • وَفِي « حُبِّهِ » • (٣) كَذَا فِي أَغْلَبِ النُّسخِ • وَفِي ت :  
 « جَفَاء » وَكَلَامًا مَصْحُوحًا •

فَلَا يُبْعِدُكَ اللَّهُ يَا بَنَ مَزَاحِمَ . وَكُلَّ أَمْرِي نَمُوتُ لَا بَدْ شَارِبُهُ  
فَقَدْ كُنْتَ طَلَّاعَ النَّجَادِ وَمُعْطَى السَّحَابِ وَسَيِّفًا لَا تُفْلُ مَضَارِبُهُ

أخبرني حبيب بن نصر المهلب قال حدثنا عبد الله بن شبيب عن الجزامي عن  
محمد بن معمر قال : بلغني أن رجلا من بني جمدة بن كعب كان أحمًا وخلا للمجنون،  
مر به يوما وهو جالس بخط في الأرض ويبحث باحصى، فسلم عليه وجلس عنده،  
فأقبل يخاطبه ويعظه ويُسِّله، وهو ينظر إليه ويلعب بيده كما كان وهو مُفَكِّر قد غمره  
ما هو فيه، فلما طال خطابه إياه قال : يا أحمي، أما لكلامي جواب؟ فقال له :  
والله يا أحمي ما علمت أنك تُكلمني فاعذرني، فتنى كما ترى مذهب العقل مُشْتَرَكُ  
اللب وبكى، ثم أنشأ يقول :

### صوت

وَشِغْنَتْ عَنْ قَهَمِ الْخَبِيثِ سَوَى . مَا كَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ شُغْلُ  
وَأَدِيمُ حَنْظُ مُحَمَّدِي لَبْرَى . أَنْ قَدْ بَغِمْتُ وَعِنْدَكُمْ عَقْلِي

الفناء لعلوية . وقال الهيم : مر المجنون بوادي أيام الربيع وحمامه يجابو  
فأنشأ يقول :

(١) كذا في ت . وفي سائر النسخ : « قلموت » .

(٢) يقال : فلان طلاع الثنايا وطلاع الخجد إذا كانت يطر الأمور فيفهرها بمعرفة وتجاربه وجوده  
رأيه . والنجاد والخنجد : جمع نجد وهو الطريق في الجبل ، وكذلك التنية . (٣) كذا في أغلب  
النسخ . وفي ت : « وبعث » . (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت ، ح :  
« مذهب بن » .

## صوت

ألا يا حَمَامَ الأيَّامِ ما لكِ بآيٍ . أقارفتِ النَّاسَ أم جفالكِ حبيبُ  
 دَعَاكَ الغوى والشوقُ فما تَرَمَّتْ . هَتُوفُ الفُحَى بين الغصونِ طُروبُ  
 تُجَاوِبُ وَرَقًا قد أَدْبَتْ لُصُوتُهَا . فَكُلُّ لِكَلٍ مُسَيِّدٌ وَجِبُّ  
 الفناء لِرِذَاذِ ثَقِيلٍ أَوَّلُ مطلقٍ في مجرى الوسطى .

وقال خالد بن حمير<sup>(١)</sup> : حدثني رجال من بني عامر أن زوج ليلى وأباها خرجا  
 في أمرٍ طَرَقَ الحَيَّ إلى مكة ، فأرسلت ليلى بأمة لها إلى المجنون فدعته فأقام عندها ليلة  
 فأخرجته في السَّحَرِ ، وقالت له : سر إنني في كل ليلة ما دام القومُ سَفَرًا ، فكان  
 يَخْتَلِفُ إليها حتى قَدِمُوا . وقال فيها في تحريلة لَيْفِهَا ودعته :  
 تَنَقَّ بِلَيْسَى إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ هَامَةٌ . من الحسام يدنو كل يوم حَمَامُهَا  
 تَنَقَّ إلى أن يرجع الركبُ إليهم . متى يرجعوا يتَّوَمَّ عليك كلامُهَا

خروج زوج ليلى  
 وأبيها إلى مكة  
 واحتلال المجنون  
 ليلى

(١) هفت الحسامه هفتا : نحت - هي هتوف . (٢) في استعمل لُصُوتُهَا وأصغين  
 إليه . (٣) من أسمعتم المرأة لمرأة فاسألتها بالباحة في مصيبت . وكانت تلك في الجاهلية إذا  
 أصبت جدها من بحيرة قبل يصر عليها نكت حولاً وأسعدوا عن ذلك حارثاً وذوات قوايتها ، فإذا  
 أصبت موارثاً به ذلك بمصيبة أسعدتهم . وفي الحديث : « لا سعد ولا عقر في الإسلام » .  
 (٤) كذا وقع هذا الاسم في ح . بلهذه المهمة وهو المرافقة التي انتقلت عليه السخ في تقدم بالجر .  
 الأول من ٩٩ و ١٠٠ وفي سائر النسخ زداد بالهال المهمة . (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ بأخاء .  
 المهمة . وفي ح : « جل » بأخيم المهمة وفي س : « جيل » . (٦) كذا في أغلب  
 النسخ . وفي س : « صر » بأعداد المهمة . (٧) السفر : جمع صافر وهو من خرج إلى السفر .  
 (٨) المهمة : أهل الزنار واسم مائة ، وكان العرب يرمون أن عظام الموتى وقيل أرواحهم تصير هامة  
 نصير . ونشأ من هذا المزم قويم : « هذا هامة اليوم أوغته » أي يموت اليوم أوغته .



وقال خبيث : مَرَضَ الْمَجْنُونُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْطُ فَعَادَهُ قَوْمُهُ وَنَسَاؤُهُمْ وَلَمْ تَعُدَّهُ لِيْلَ  
فِي قَدْرٍ عَمْرًا

### صوت

أَلَا مَا لِلَّيْلِ لَا تُرَى عِنْدَ مَضْجَعِي • بَيْسَ وَلَا يَجْرِي بِهَا نِيَّ طَائِرُ  
يَلِي مَا تَحْتَمُّ الطَّيْرُ تَجْرِي إِذَا جَرَتْ • يَلِيلٌ وَلَكِنْ لَيْسَ لِلطَّيْرِ زَاوِرُ  
أَحَالَتْ عَنِ الْعَهْدِ الَّذِي كَانَ بَيْنَنَا • بِذِي الرِّثِّ أَمْ قَدْ غَيَّبَتْهَا الْمَقَابِرُ  
الْقَاءُ يُسْلِمُ ثَانِي تَقِيلُ بِالْوَضْعِ عَنِ الْمَتْنِ •  
فَوَاللَّهِ مَا فِي الْقُرْبِ نِيَّ مَتْنٍ رَاحَةٌ • وَلَا الْبُعْدُ يُسْلِمُنِي وَلَا أَنَا صَابِرُ  
وَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَدْرِي بِأَيَّةِ جِسْنَةٍ • وَثِيَّ مَرَامٍ أَوْ خَطَايَا أَخَاطِرُ  
وَوَاللَّهِ إِنِّي الدَّهْرُ فِي ذَاتِ بَيْنَنَا • عَلَى مَا فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ بِالْخَائِرُ  
فَلَوْ كُنْتُ إِذَا أَرْمَعْتُ تَجْرِي تَرْكِنِي • جَنِّعُ الْقَوَى وَالْعُقْلُ مَنَى وَاقِرُ  
وَلَكِنْ أَيْامِي بِحَقْلٍ عُنَيْزَةٍ • وَذِي الرِّثِّ أَيْامُ جَنَاهَا التَّجَاوُرُ  
فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ الْوَدُّ الَّذِي كَانَ بَيْنَنَا • أَمَانِي نَفْسٍ إِنِّي تَحَسَّرَ خَائِرُ  
لَعْنِي لَقَدْ أَرْمَعْتُ يَا أَمَّ مَالِكٍ • حَيَاتِي وَسَاتَتْنِي تَبْسِكُ الْمَقَادِرُ

أَخْبَرَنِي عَمْرُو بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَصْبَهَانِيِّ الْمَعْرُوفِ بِالْحَزَنِيِّ عَنْ  
عَمْرُو بْنِ أَبِي عَمْرٍو الشَّيْبَانِيِّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ : حَدَّثَنِي بَعْضُ بَنِي عُقَيْلٍ قَالَ : قِيلَ لِلْمَجْنُونِ

- (١) الرِّث : شَجَرِيَّةٌ . حَقْلٌ لَا يَصُولُ وَيَسْطُو وَدَفْعٌ . وَذُو الرِّثِّ : وَادٌ لِيْلِي أَحَدٌ . انظر يا قوت .  
(٢) كَذَا فِي أَكْثَرِ النُّسخ . وَفِي ش : ح . « إِدْأَعْتُ » وَهُوَ يَمْسِي « أَرْمَعْتُ » .  
(٣) أَيْ مَجْنَعُ الْقَوَى . كَذَا فِي ب . ش . مَالِد . وَاقْتُل : الْأَجْمَاعُ يُقَالُ :  
حَقْلُ الْمَاءِ . أَيْ احْتَجَّعَ وَحَصَلَ الْوَادِي إِذَا جَاءَ بِمِلْ . جَنِيَّةٌ . وَالْمَوَادُّ هِيَ مَرْوَعُ الْحَقْلِ . وَعُنَيْزَةٌ :  
بُقْعَةٌ يَتَمَرُّ إِلَيْهَا . أَوْدِيَّةٌ . وَفِي لِيْلِي عَامِرٌ . وَفِي ح . ي : « حَقْلٌ » مَقْدَفٌ . وَاقْتُل : الْفَرْوَةُ .  
وَفِي أ . م . « جَنِّعُ » مَجْمُوعٌ وَهَذَا وَهُوَ يَضْرِبُهُ مَعْنَى مَسَّ .

أى شيء رأيته أحب إليك؟ قال : ليل ، قيل : دَع ليل فقد عرفنا ما هنا عندك<sup>(١)</sup>  
ولكن سواها ، قال : والله ما أعجبنى شيء قط فذكرت ليل إلا سقط من عيني  
وأذهب ذكرها بشاشته عندي ، غير أني رأيت ظيلاً مرة فنامته وذكرت ليل بفعل  
يزداد في عيني حسناً ، ثم إنه عارضه ذئب وحرب منه فتبعته حتى خفياً عني فوجدت  
الذئب قد صرعه وأكل بعضه ، فومئته بسهم فأخطأت مقتله ، وبقرت بطنه فأنجرت  
ما أكل منه ، ثم جمعته إلى بقية سلوه ودفنته وأحرق الذئب ، وقلت في ذلك :  
أبى الله أن تبقى لحى بشاشة • فصبراً على ما شاء الله لي صبراً  
رأيت غزالاً يرتبى وسط روضة • فقلت أرى ليلي تراءت لنا ظهراً  
فيا ظبي كل رعداً هنياً ولا تخف • فإنك لي جار ولا تريب الدهراً  
وعندي لكم حصن حصين وصارم • حاسم إذا أعملته أحسن المسبراً<sup>(٢)</sup>  
فما راغى إلا وذئب قد اتقى • فأعلق في أحشائه الناب والطفراً<sup>(٣)</sup>  
فنفقت سبى في كنوم عزمها • فخالط سبى مهبجة الذئب والنحراً<sup>(٤)</sup>  
فأذهب غيظي قتله وشنى جوى • بقلبي إن الحر قد يدرك الوترا<sup>(٥)</sup>

(١) في ت : « حافاً » . (٢) انشور : الجسد من كل شيء ويطلق على العضو  
من أعضاء اللحم . (٣) الحبر : القطع . ومنه قول علي عليه السلام : « أنظروا شيزاً وأضرَبُوا  
هَبْراً » . وفي حديث الشراء : « فبهزاهم بالسيف » . (٤) اتقى : اعترض . (٥) كذا  
في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت وتزيين الاسواق : « فبِئَاتُ » أى مددت يقال : برأ الرج نحوه إذا قابله به  
وسدده . (٦) كذا في ت ، ح . والكنوم من القسي : التي لا ترون إذا أنبضت . وكانت  
قوس رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تسمى الكنوم لانخفاض صوتها إذا رمى عنها . وفي سائر النسخ :  
« كنوم » . (٧) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت « والنحرا » والنحر : أذنة والكبد  
وسواد القلب ونواحيه وقيل : القلب .

قال أبو نصر : بلغ المجنون قبل نوحشه أن زوج ليل ذكره وعضبه وسبه<sup>(١)</sup>  
وقال : أو بلغ من قدر قيس بن المتوح أن يدعى عبدة ليل ويؤوه باسمها ! فقال  
ليخطفه بذلك :

فإن كان فيكم بعل ليل فأتني • وذى العرش قد قبلت فاهانمايا  
وأشهد عند الله أتى رأيها • وعشرون منها أصبعاً من ورأيها  
أليس من البلوى التي لا شوى لها<sup>(٢)</sup> • بأن زوجت كلباً وما يذلت ليا

أخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثنا عبد الله بن عمرو بن أبي سعد قال حدثنا  
علي بن الصباح عن ابن الكلبي قال : خرج المجنون في عذبة من قومه يريدون سقراً  
لهم ، فزوا في طريق يتشعب وجهتين : إحداهما بقرها رهط ليل وفيها زيادة مرحلة ،  
فسألهم أن يعدلوا معه إلى تلك الوجهة فأبوا ، فغضى وحده وقال :

### صوت

أترك ليل ليس بيني وبينها • سوى ليلة إني إذا تصبور  
هبوني أمراً منكم أضل بعيره • له ذمة إن التمام كبير  
وللصاحب المتروك أعظم حزمة • على صاحب من أن يضل بعير  
عفا الله عن ليل الغداة فإنها • إذا وليت حكاماً على تجسور

(١) عضبه بضمه ضبا : قال فيه ما لم يكن • (٢) لا شوى ضاً أي لا يقيا لها •  
والمراد وصف البلوى بتمهي الشدة يقال : القتل الخفة التي لا شوى ضاً أي لا يقيا لها ، ومنه قول  
المسلم :

فإن من القول التي لا شوى لها • إذا زل عن ظهر النسان أقلاها  
يريد بالقول الكلمة التي لا يقيا لها أي القاذرة •

الفناء لأبن سريح خفيف رمل بالوسطى عن [ عمرو وفيه لتغريض ذاتي ثقيل  
بالوسطى عن ] حبش، وفيه لأبن المارق خفيف ثقيل عن الخشامي، وفيه لعلوية  
رمل بالنصر.

وذكر عمرو بن أبي عمرو الشيباني عن أبيه : أن المجنون كان ذات ليلة جالسا  
مع أصحاب له من بني عمه وهو ولده يتلظى ويحمل وم يعضونه ويحادثونه، حتى  
هتفت حمامة من سرجة كانت بإزارهم، فوثب قائما وقال :

هتفت حمامة قال  
سرا

### صوت

لقد غرّدت في جنح ليل حمامة \* على الفها تبكي وإني لستائم  
كذبت وبنت الله لو كنت عاشقا \* لما سبقتني بالبكاء الحنائم

ثم بكى حتى سقط على وجهه مفضيا عليه، فما أفاق حتى حيت الشمس عليه  
من غده. الفناء في هذين البيتين لعبد الله بن دحمان ثقيل أول مطلق في مجرى الوسطى

(١) زيادة في ش . (٢) السرجة : واحدة السرج . وهو كل شجر لا شوك فيه وثقل كل شجر  
طال . (٣) في الديوان : « هتفت » . (٤) كذا ورد هذا البيت متصلا بالبيت الذي  
قبله في جميع النسخ وجاء بهامش ش بيتان كتب في آخرهما « صح » ونسب الأول منهما لبيت  
الأول أعني قوله : لقد غرّدت في جنح ليل الخ . والبيتان هما :

قلت اعتذارا عند ذلك وإني \* نفسي فإني قد رأيت للائم

أزعم أني عاشق ذو صابة \* ليل ولا أبكي وبكيت البهائم

والآيات الأربعة وردت في الديوان على نحو ما جاء في ش إلا قوله « رأيت » في بيت الأول  
قد جاء بدله في الديوان « أبيت » . والافتقار على اثنين اثنين في الأصل موافق ذكره الخليل  
بعد فيها من الفناء . (٥) كذا في ش . وفي ما في النسخ : « في غده » .

وذكر أبو نصر عن أصحابه أن رجلاً مرَّ بالمجنون وهو يرمل يبرين <sup>(١)</sup> يحطط فيه،  
فوقف عليه متعجباً منه وكان لا يعرفه، فقال له : ما بك يا أحمى ؟ فرفع رأسه إليه  
وأنا يقول :

يَ الْيَاسُ والداءُ الهَيَامُ أصابني \* قَايَاكَ عَنِّي لَا يَكُنْ بَكَ مَا يَسَا  
كَانَ جَفُونَ الْعَيْنِ تَهَيَّيْ دُمُوعُهَا \* غَدَاةَ رَأَتْ أَظْلَعَانِ لَيْسَ غَوَايَا  
غُرُوبٌ أَمْرَتْهَا نَوَاضِحٌ بَزَلٌ \* عَلَى عَجَلٍ تُحْمِمْ يَرْوِينَ صَادِيَا <sup>(٢)</sup>

وقال خالد بن جمل : ذكر حماد الراوية أن نقرا من أهل اليمن مرَّوا بالمجنون،  
فوقفوا ينظرون إليه فأنشأ يقول :

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الرِّكْبُ الْيَمَانُونَ عَرَّجُوا \* عَلَيْنَا فَقَدْ أَمْسَى هَوَانَا يَمَانِيَا  
تُسَائِلُكُمْ هَلْ سَأَلَ تَعْمَانٌ بَعْدَنَا \* وَحَبَّ إِلَيْنَا بَطْنُ تَعْمَانَ وَادِيَا

(١) يبرين - ويقال : أبرين بالألف - قرية كثيرة النخل والنباتات العذبة وفيها رمل كثير، بينها وبين  
الأحساء مرحلتان . انظر ياقوت في يبرين وأبرين . وجاء في معجم ما استعجم ليكري : «وحدة ابن جمل  
يل المشرق رمل بنى سعد الذي يقال له رمل يبرين» وهو مفرد من الجماعة حتى يسرع في البحر .  
(٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي نسخة والديوان وترين الأسواق «أوداء الهيام» والهام : حب  
ابن من العشق ، يقال : هام الرجل هياماً فهو هائم إذا ذهب عن وجهه عتفاً . (٣) كذا  
في أغلب النسخ . وفي نسخة : «تشي» وهو تحريف . (٤) الأظعان : جمع  
ظبية وهو الجمل يظعن عليه . (٥) الغروب : جمع غرب وهو الدلو الكبير الذي يستق به  
عن الثانية . وأمرتها : جمعها تمر وتذهب . والنواضح : جمع ناضح وهو ما يستق عليه الماء  
من نحو البعير والثور وغيرهما من الناضح وهو سق الزرع وغيره بالسانية . والبزل : جمع مازل وهو  
البعير الذي استكمل السنة الثالثة وضمن في ثلثة وفطير قاه . (٦) كذا في أغلب النسخ  
بالهمزة . وفي نسخة : «حمل» بأخاء المهمة ، وهو الموافق لأغلب النسخ فبا تقدم  
في ص ٧٢ من هذا الجزء .

يقول في هذه القصيدة :

### صوت

ألا بأحامي قصير ودان<sup>(١)</sup> هجتنا • على الموى لما تغتبتنا لب  
فابكتنا ونط قحفي ولم أكن • أبالي دموع العين لو كنت خالبا  
غنى في هذين اليتيم علويه غناء لم ينسب •

فوالله إني لا أحب • نصير أن • تحل بها ليل، البراق الأعالي<sup>(٢)</sup>  
ألا يا خليل حب ليل مجنبي • حياض المنايا أو مقبدي الأعاديا<sup>(٣)</sup>  
ويا أيها القمر تان تجاوبا • بلحنكا ثم أجمعا عللايا  
فإن أتمنا استطربنا<sup>(٤)</sup> وأردنا • لحاقا بأطراف النقى فاتبعايا<sup>(٥)</sup>

قال أبو نصر : وذكر خاله بن كلثوم أن زوج ليل لما أراد الرحيل بها إلى بلدته  
بلغ المجنون أنه غاد بها فقال :

بله أن زوج ليل  
سيرحل بها فقال  
شعرا

### صوت

أمر معة للبين ليل<sup>(٦)</sup> ونم تئت • كائنك عما قد أظلك غافل  
ستعلم إن شطت بهم غربة<sup>(٧)</sup> التوى • وزالوا بيل أنك زائل

- (١) سبق الكلام على « ودان » بصفحة ٣٢٤ بالجزء الأول . (٢) كذا في ت  
روى باقي النسخ « به » والبراق : جمع رقة وهو أرض غليظة مختلطة بحجارة ورمل . (٣) أى يجمل  
فيادى في يد الأعداء ، يقال : أقاده خيلا أعطاه بإيها يقودها . (٤) استطربنا : طلبنا  
النزير . (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت واندريان وترين الأسواق : « باطلال » .  
(٦) غربة التوى : بعدها .

الفناء للزير بن دحمان ثبيل أول بالوسطى :

قال أبو نصر قال خالد : وحذثنى جماعة من بني قشير أن المجنون سقم سقاما شديدا<sup>(١)</sup> قبل اختلاطه حتى أشتى على الهلاك ، فدخل إليه أبوه بعلمه فوجده يشد هذه<sup>(٢)</sup> الأبيات ويكي أربكاه وينشج أرنبيج<sup>(٣)</sup> :

ألا أيها القلب الذي لج هائما • بيلى وليدا لم تقطع نساخه  
أفنى قد أفاق العاشقون وقد أنى • حالك أن تلق طيبا نلاخه<sup>(٤)</sup>  
فمالك ملوب الغراء كائما • تربي نأى ليل مغرما أنت غارمه  
أجلك لا تُنيك ليل ميلة • تلم ولا يُنيك عهدا تقادمه<sup>(٥)</sup>

خبرته المأهون  
لى وقد رحل بها  
زوجها

قال : ووقف مسترا ينظر إلى أظعان ليل وقد رحل بها زوجها وقومها، فلما رآهم يرتحلون بكى وجزع ، فقال له أبوه : وبمك ! إنما جئنا بك متخفيا لبتروخ بعض ما بك بالنظر إليهم ، فإذا فعلت ما أرى عُرفت ، وقد أهدر السلطان دمك إن مررت بهم ، فنيك أو قانصيف ، فقال : ما لي سبيل إلى النظر إليهم يرتحلون وأنا ساكن غير جازع ولا بالك قانصيف بنا ، قانصيف وهو يقول :

### صوت

دِدِ الدمع حتى يظعن الحى إنما • دموعك إن فاضت عليك دليل  
كأن دموع العين يوم تمهلوا • جمان على جيب القميص يسيل<sup>(٦)</sup>

- (١) في ش «حقنا» وكلاما صحيح . (٢) يعله : بحدته وبسبه . (٣) ينشج : من نشج الياسنج أى غص باليكاء في حقه من غير انتخاب . (٤) كذا في أغلب الأصول ، ووردت في أول هذا الجزء في ش «أرى» انظر ص ٦ حاشية ٤ . (٥) كذا في ب ، ص . وفي ش «لما بك» . وفي بقية الأصول «لما لك» ووردت في أول هذا الجزء : «كك اليوم» انظر ص ٦ . (٦) كذا في أغلب نسخ وفي ب : «وجدتك» . (٧) تمهلوا : ارتحلوا . (٨) جيب القميص : ما يفتح على الشعر .

أخبرني محمد بن خلف بن المرزبان قال أنشدني إسماعيل بن محمد عن بعض أصحابه عن ابن الأعرابي للجنون :

### صوت

ألا ليت ليلى أطفأت حرَّ زَفْرَةٍ • أعالجها لا أستطيع لها رَدًا  
إذا الرِّيحُ من نَحْوِ الجَمَى نَسَمَتْ لنا • وجدتُ لَمَسَها ومنتَمها <sup>(١)</sup> بردًا  
على كَيْدٍ قد كاد يُبْدِي بها الهوى • تُدَوِّبُ <sup>(٢)</sup> وبعضُ التَّوَمِ يحسُّني جَلَدًا <sup>(٣)</sup>

هذا البيت الثالثُ خاصَّةٌ يروى لابنِ حَرَمَةَ في بعض قصائده، وهو من المائة المختارة التي رواها إسماعيل، أوله :

• أفاطمُ إنَّ النَّائِي يُسَلِّي من الهوى <sup>(٤)</sup> •

وقد أُخرج في موضع آخر • غنى في هذين البيتين عبدُ آلِ الهنلي، وخُتْمُ المختارِ على ما ذكره جحظةٌ ثاني ثَقِيلٌ، وهما في هذه القصيدة :

وإني يَمَانِي الهوى مُنِجِدُ التَّوَى • سِبِلَانُ أَلْقَى من خلافتها جَهْدًا  
سَقَى اللهُ تَجْدًا من ربيعٍ وَصَيْفٍ <sup>(٥)</sup> • وماذا يُرِجِي من ربيعٍ سَقَى تَجْدًا <sup>(٦)</sup>

- 
- (١) كذا في ت • ح • وتزيين الأسواق • وفي بقية الأصول • وسبها • وهو تصحيف •  
(٢) كذا في ت • ح • وتزيين الأسواق • وفي بقية الأصول • كان • (٣) اتدوب : جمع تدب، والتدب : جمع تدبة وهي أثر الجرح • وقيل : التدب واحد كاللدة والجمع أقداب وتدوب •  
(٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ • وفي ت • « يسلي ذري أخرى » • (٥) كذا في ت • وهو الموافق لسياق في ذكر الهدل وأخباره في ج • ضيع يولاق وهو عبد آل بن مسعود • وفي بقية الأصول « عدان » بالنون وهو تحريف • (٦) كذا في أغلب النسخ • وفي ت • « وتساء هذه القصيدة » • (٧) الربيع : اغتر في اربيع • (٨) تصيف : المعري يجرى في تصيف • أورد اربيع •



بلى إته قد كَنَّ للبيش قُوَّةً . وللصَّحْبِ والزَّجَّاجِ مِثْلُهُ حَمْدًا<sup>(١)</sup>  
 أبى القلبُ أن يَنْفُكُ من ذِكْرِ نِسْوَةٍ . رِقَّتِي وَهُدًى يُخْلِقُنِ شُؤْمًا وَلَا تُكْذِبُ<sup>(٢)</sup>  
 إِذَا رُحْنٌ يَسْعَى النَّدْيُونَ عَشِيَّةً . وَيَقْتُلِبُ<sup>(٣)</sup> بِالْأَحْلَاطِ أَغْصَانًا عَمْدًا  
 مَتْنَى عَيْطَلَاتٍ رُجَّحَ بِغُصُورِهَا . رَوَادِفُ<sup>(٤)</sup> وَغَنَاتُ<sup>(٥)</sup> تَرْدُ<sup>(٦)</sup> الْخَطَا رَدًّا  
 وَهَتَرَ<sup>(٧)</sup> لَيْلَى الْعَامِرِيَّةُ فَوْقَهَا . وَلَاقَتْ<sup>(٨)</sup> بِسَبِّ<sup>(٩)</sup> الْقَسْرَ ذَا غَدْرِ جَعْدًا  
 إِذَا حَرَّكَ<sup>(١٠)</sup> الْمِدْرَى صَفَاتُهَا الْعَمَلَا . تَجَحَّجْنَ<sup>(١١)</sup> نَدَى الرِّيحَانِ وَالْعَبَرِ الْوَرْدَا  
 وَأَخْبَارُ<sup>(١٢)</sup> الْهَدْلِيِّينَ تُذَكِّرُ فِي غَيْرِ هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ أَنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمَّا تَقَطَّعَ أَخْبَارُ الْمَجْنُونِ،  
 وَلَهَا فِي الْمَسَائِدِ الصَّوْتِ الْمُخْتَارَةِ أَغَانٍ تَذَكِّرُ أَخْبَارُهَا مَعًا إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ .

أخبرني أحمد بن جعفر بحضرة قال حدثني ميمون بن هارون قال ذكر الهيثم  
 ابن عدي . وأخبرني محمد بن خلف [ بن المروزيان ]<sup>(١١)</sup> عن أحمد بن الهيثم عن العُمري  
 عن الهيثم بن عدي قال : مرَّ المجنونُ برجلين قد صادا طيِّبَةً فربطتاها بحبلٍ وذهبا بينا .  
 فلما نظر إليهما وهى تركُّضُ في جِباها دَمَعَتْ عَيْنُهُ ، وَقَالَ لَمْ : حُلَاهَا وَحُدَّ مَكَانَهَا

خبر طيبة صادها  
 رحلان فسلها أن  
 يطلقها

(١) حدا أي عمودة يقال : رجل حد ومثل حد أي عمود وهو من قيل الوصف بالحدود فيوصف  
 به المذكر والمؤنث . (٢) في ته وتربين الأسوق : « شوها » : جمع شوها .  
 (٣) العيطلات : جمع عيطلة وهي الخوذة تعلق في حرسه وتوصف به المرأة والناقة . والفراديب حد  
 التباقي . (٤) الروادف : الأبحاز . قال ابن سبته : ولا أدري أفرج رواف عن  
 غير قياس أو هو جمع رادفة . (٥) الوغضات : اللجئات . (٦) لانت : نفت  
 وعصبت ، يقال : لانت العمامة على رأسه لو أنفادها وعصبا . (٧) السب : التماس .  
 (٨) القدر : جمع ندرة وهي الخوذة . (٩) الحدي : الشط وقيل : حديدة على شكل  
 من أسنان الشط وأطول منه يسبح به شعرا لظنه . (١٠) هما سجد وعبد آل فها معبود .  
 وقد ذكرنا بأخبار الرابع من مائة مع يوفى ص ١٥٢ (١١) زيادة في ته .

شاة من غنى — وقال مبيون في خبره : وَحُذَا مَكَانَهَا قَلُوصًا مِنْ إِبِلٍ — فاعطاهما  
 وحَلَّاهَا فَوَلَّتْ تَعْدُو هَارِبَةً . وقال الخجنون للرجلين حين رآها في حبالها :  
 يَا صَاحِبِي اللَّذَيْنِ الْيَوْمَ قَدْ أَخَذَا \* فِي الْجَبَلِ نِسْبًا لِلَيْلِ ثُمَّ غَلَّاهَا  
 إِنِّي أَرَى الْيَوْمَ فِي أُعْطَافِ شَانِكُمَا \* مَشَاهِبًا أَشْبَهَتْ لَيْلِي حُلَّاهَا  
 قال : وقال فيها وقد نظر إليها [وهي] <sup>(١)</sup> تَعْدُو أَشَدَّ عَدُو هَارِبَةً مَذْعُورَةً :

### صوت

أَيَا شِبَةَ لَيْلَى لَا تُرَاعِي فَاتِنِي \* لَكَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ وَحْشِيَةِ لَصَدِيقُ  
 وَيَا شِبَةَ لَيْلَى لَوْ تَلَبَّيْتُ سَاعَةً \* لَعَلَّ فَوَادِي مِنْ جَوَاهِ يُبْقِي  
 تَفْسِرُوقَدْ أَطْلَقْتُهَا مِنْ وَثَاقِهَا \* فَانْتِ لِلَّيْلِ لَوْ عَلِمْتَ طَلِيقُ

وذكر أبو نصر عن جماعة من الرواة وذكر أبو مسلم ومحمد بن الحسن الأحمول  
 أن ابن الأعرابي أخبرهما أن نسوة جلسن إلى الخجنون فقلن له : ما الذي دعاك إلى  
 أن أحللت بنفسك ما ترى في هوى ليلي، وإنما هي امرأة من النساء، هل لك في أن  
 تصرف هوائك عنها إلى إحدانا فنساعفك ونجزيك بهوائك ويرجع إليك ما عزب من  
 عقلك وجسمك؟ فقال لهن : لو قدرتُ على صرف الهوى عنها لكنُ لعرفتُ عنها  
 وعن كل أحد بعدها وعشتُ في الناس سويًا مستريحًا فقلن له : ما أعجبك منها؟  
 فقال : كل شيء رأيتُه وشاهدته وسمعتُه منها أعجبنى، والله ما رأيتُ شيئًا منها قط  
 إلا كان في عيني حسنًا وبقلبي علقًا، ولقد جَهِدْتُ أَنْ يَقْبَعَ مِنْهَا خَسْدِي شَيْءٌ  
 أَوْ يَسْمُجَ أَوْ يُعَابَ لَأَسْلُوَ عَنْهَا قَلَمَ أَجْدِهِ، فقلن له : قَصِّفْهَا لَنَا، فأنشأ يقول :

خبره مع نسوة فذكره  
 في حب ليل

(١) زيادة في ت . (٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ٢ ، ١ : « نرى » بالون .

(٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ب ، د : « فيها » .

بيضاً خائفةً أبيض كائب . <sup>(١)</sup> قمر تومض جح ليل مبرد  
 مؤسومةً بأحسن ذات حواسيد . <sup>(٢)</sup> إن الجبال مظنة للحد  
 وتري مدامعياً ترفوق مقله . <sup>(٣)</sup> سوداء ترغب عن سواد الإثم  
 خود إذا كثر الكلام تعوذت . <sup>(٤)</sup> يحى الجباء وإن تكلم تقصيد  
 قال : ثم قال ابن الأعرابي : هذا والله من حبي الكلام ومفتح الشعر  
 وأشد أبو نصر مجنون أبيض . وفيه غناء ، قال :

كانت فؤادي في محلب طائر . <sup>(٥)</sup> إذا ذكرت ليل يند بها قبضا  
 كان جراح الأرض حلقه خاتم . <sup>(٦)</sup> على : فارتداد طولا ولا عرضا

أخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثنا محمد بن القاسم بن مهروية قال حدثنا  
 أبو مسلم عن القعدي قال : قال رجل من عشيرة المجنون له : إني أريد الإسلام  
 يحيى ليل فهل تؤيدني إليها شيء؟ فقال : نعم ! قف بحيث تسمعك ثم قل :

### صوت

الله يعلم أن النفس هلكة . <sup>(٧)</sup> بالياس منك ولكني أعنيها  
 ميتك النفس حتى قد أضرب بها . <sup>(٨)</sup> وأسيفقت خلقا ما أميها  
 وساعة منك ألوها وإن قصرت . <sup>(٩)</sup> أشهى إلى من الدنيا وما فيها

- (١) الخود : القناة الخسة التي انتابة ماء نصر تصفا . (٢) يقال : قصد في الأمر  
 قصدا : توسط وطأ السداد ولم يجاوز حقه . (٣) في ت : « وطيح الشعر » .  
 (٤) كذا في جميع النسخ . وفي ترتيب الأصوات : « يندبه » . وفي الهجاء : « إذا ذكرت  
 النفس فندت به قبضا » . (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت : « وترين الأصوات » :  
 « قد هلكت » . (٦) غيب : « كمها ما يشق عليا » .

قال : ففضى الرجل ، ولم يزل يرقب حنوة حتى وجدده ، فوقف عليها ثم قال ضاً :  
يا ليل لقد أحسن الذى يقول :

الله يعلم أن النسر هالكة • بالياس منك ولكنى أعتبها

وأشد الأبيات ؛ فبكت بكاء طويلاً ثم قالت : أبلغه السلام وقل له :

قسي فداؤك ، لو تنسى ملكك إذا • ما كان غيرك يتحزبها ويؤذيها

صيراً على ما قضاه الله فيك على • مرارة في أصطبارى عنك أخفيها

قال : فأبلغه الفتى اليتيم وأخبره بما لها ؛ فبكى حتى سقط على وجهه مفشياً عليه ،  
ثم أفاق وهو يقول :

عجبت لعروة المذرى أضفى • أحاديثاً تقويم بعد قسوم

وعروة مات موتاً مستريحاً • وها أنا ميتٌ فى كل يوم -

أخبرنا محمد بن يحيى الصولى قال أنشدنا أحمد بن يحيى نعلب عن أبي نصر  
للجنون :

### صوت

أيا زينة الدنيا التى لا ينالها • منى ولا يسدو قلبي صريمها

بمعنى قذاة من حوائك لو أنها • تداوى بين تهوى لصح منبها<sup>(١)</sup>

وما صبرت عن ذكرك النفس ساعة • وإن كنت أحياناً كثيراً ألومها

أخبرنى الحسن بن على قال حدثنا عبد الله بن أبى سعد قال حدثنا على  
أبن الصباح عن أبى الكلي قال : سأل الملقح أبو الجنون رجلاً قديماً من الطائف

سأل أبو الجنون  
رجلاً أن يلقه أن  
يلتفت

(١) كذا فى ت . وفى سائر النسخ « أهوى » .

أن يترى بالمجنون فيجلس إليه فيخبره أنه نقي لير وجلس إليها . ووصف له صفات منها  
ومن كلامها يعرفها المجنون ، وقال له : حدثني بها . فإذا رأيته قد أشرأب<sup>(٢)</sup> لحديثك  
وأشتهاه فعرفه أنك ذكرته لها ووصفت ما به فشتته وسبته ، وقالت : إنه يكذب  
عليها ويُسهرها بفعله ، وإنما ما أجنمت معه فطكا يصف<sup>(٣)</sup> بفعل الرجل ذلك ،  
وجاء إليه فأخبره ببقائه إياها فأقبل عليه وجعل يسأله عنها . فيخبره بما أمره به الملقح<sup>(٤)</sup> ،  
فيزداد نشاطا وينوب إليه عقله . إلى أن أخبره بسبها إياه وشتيها له . فقال وهو غير  
مُكرث لما حكاها عنها :

### صوت

نمز الصبا صفحا بساكن ذى الفقى . وبصدع قلبي أن يبب<sup>(٥)</sup> جُوبها  
إذا هبَّ الریح الشمال فأنما . جوائى بما تُهدى إلى جُوبها  
قريبة عهد بالحب وانما . هوى كل نفس حيث كان حبيبها  
وحسب اللالى أن طرحتك مطرحا . بدار قلى نسي وأنت غريمها  
حلال ليلى شمتنا وانتفاصنا<sup>(٦)</sup> . هبنا ومنغفور ليلى ذنوبها  
ذكر أبو أيوب المدني أن الغناء في هذا الشعر لأبن سريح ولم يذكر طريقته .  
وفيه لقيم غناء بنسب . وذكر الميم بن عدى أن المجنون قال — وفيه غناء — :

(١) كذا في ت . وفي باقي النسخ « ويصف له » . (٢) اشرب : رفع رأسه ليظهر .  
(٣) زيادة في ت . (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي س ، ه ، ح :  
« شتمها وانتفاصها » . (٥) في أغلب النسخ : « اللقى » . وفي ت : « اللغنى » ،  
وما أشتته هو الذى جاء في أغلب النسخ في مواضع تقدمت (انظر الحاشية رقم ٢ ص ٨ من هذا الجزء) .

## صوت

كَأَنَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَيْسَ تُرَارُ بِذِي الْأَثَلِ <sup>(١)</sup> • وَبِالْخُرُجِ <sup>(٢)</sup> مِنْ أَجْزَاعٍ وَذَانِ قَالَتِ  
صَدِيقُ لَنَا فَمَا تَرَى غُيْبَ أُنْهَا • تَرَى أَنْ حَبِي قَدْ أَحَلَّ لَهَا قَتْلِي <sup>(٣)</sup>

أخبرني عمي قال حدثنا الكزائي قال حدثنا العمري عن الهيثم بن عدي عن عثمان  
ابن عمار بن حريم عن أشياخ من بني مرة قالوا : خرج منا رجل إلى ناحية الشام  
والبحر وما على تيماء والسراة وأرض نجد، في طلب يغبة له، فإذا هو بخيمة قد رفعت له  
وقد أصابه المطر فعدل إليها وتحنن، فإذا امرأة قد كتته فقالت : انزل، فقتل <sup>(٤)</sup> [قال]

وصف رجل  
الهيون إلى بكت  
وقالت شعرا

(١) الأثل : واحدة أثة وهي شجرة مستقيمة تعمل منها القصاع والاقداح ، ويقال لها : سمرة .  
ولم نجد في أسماء المواضع إلا « ذات الأثل » وهو موضع في بلاد نيم الله بن طلبة ، وقد نجى في الشعر  
باسم ذي الأثل كما قال الشاعر :

قالت ترجع الأيام يعني وينكم • بذى الأثل سيف مثل سيف ومربري  
انظر يا قوت في مادة الأثل . ومن المحتمل أن يريد الشاعر بذى الأثل موضعا به شجر الأثل . (٢) كذا  
في أغلب النسخ . والجرح : مقطع الوادي . وفي ش : « وبالسد من أجزاع » والسد :  
التي واحدة سدوة ، والمراد موضع به هذا الشجر . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ش :  
« قائل » بالهاء . قال يا قوت في الكلام على ودان : وقرأت بخط كراع المختار على ظهر كتاب  
المنصف من تصنيفه : قال بعضهم : خرجت حاجا فلما جرت يودان أنشدت :

أيما صاحب الخيول من بعد أرند • إلى النخل من ودان ما فعلت ثم  
قال رجل من أهلها : انظر هل ترى نخلا ؟ قلت : لا ، قال : هذا خطأ إنما هو النخل ، ونخل الوادي :  
جانبه . ولم نجد في كتب اللغة التي بين أيدينا أن من معاني النخل جانب الوادي . (٤) الصديق  
يوصف به المذكور والمؤنث ، قال كثير :

لبالي من عيش مسوتا يوجهه • زماما وصعدني لي صديق مواسل

(٥) كذا في ش ، و « ابن حريم » بالهاء والراء المهملتين . وهو المواق لما جاء في تاريخ ابن جرير  
الطبري ص ٢٨١ قسم ٣ طبع أوروبا وفي ب ، س ، ح ، م « عن حريم » بالهاء المهمل والراء  
المهمل . (٦) المرأة : الجبال والأرض الحاجة بين تيماء ونجد . (٧) زيادة في ش .

وراحت إبلهم وغمهم فإذا أمرٌ عظيم، فقالت: سلوا هذا الرجل من أين أقبل؟ قلت: من ناحية تيمامة ونجد، فقالت: ادخل أيها الرجل، فدخلت إلى ناحية من النخلة، فارخت بيني وبينها سترًا ثم قالت لي: يا عبدالله، أي بلاد نجد وطئت؟ قلت: كلها، قالت: فيمن نزلت هناك؟ قلت: بنى عامر، فتغست الصعداء ثم قالت: فبئى بنى عامر نزلت؟ قلت: بنى الحارث، فاستعرت ثم قالت: فهل سمعت بكركى منهم يقال له: قيس بن الملتح ويثقب بالمجنون؟ قلت: بلى والله! وعلى أبيه نزلت، وأتيته فنظرت إليه يهيم في تلك الفياق، ويكون مع الوحش لا يعقل [ولا يهضم] <sup>(١)</sup> إلا أن تذكر له امرأة يقال لها ليل، فيكى وينشد أشعارا قالها فيها. قال: فوقعت الستر بيني وبينها، فإذا فتنة قمر لم ترعني مثلها، فبكت حتى ظننت - والله - أن قلبها قد أنصدع، فقلت: آيتها المرأة، أتتني الله فما قلت بأسا، فكنثت طويلا على تلك الحال من البكاء والتعيب ثم قالت:

ألا ليت شعري وأخطوب كثيرة • متى رحل قيس مستنقلا فراجع  
بنسى من لا يستنل برحله • ومن هو إن لم يحفظ الله ضائع

ثم بكت حتى سقطت مغشيا عليها، فقلت لها: من أنت يا أمة الله؟ وما قصتك؟ قالت: أنا ليل [صاحته] <sup>(١)</sup> المشومة [والله] <sup>(١)</sup> عليه غير المؤنس له <sup>(٢)</sup>، فما رأيت مثل حرتها ووجدتها عليه [قط] <sup>(١)</sup>.

أخبرني أحمد بن عبد العزيز الجوهري وحبيب بن نصر المهلبى <sup>(٣)</sup> قالوا: حدثنا عمر بن شبة قال ذكر الهيم بن عدي عن عثمان بن عمار، وأخبرني عثمان عن الكرائى عن العمري عن ثقيط، وحدثنا إبراهيم بن أيوب عن عبد الله بن مسلم قال ذكر الهيم

(١) زيادة في ت - (٢) في ت - «المراية» - (٣) في ت - «عمر عن الكرائى» -

خبر شيخ من  
بنى مرة لق المجنون  
ورحمه بنا في واد

أَبْنُ عَدَى عَنْ عُمَانَ بْنِ عِمَارَةَ، وَذَكَرَ أَبُو نَصْرٍ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَتِّمٍ صَاحِبُ الْأَصْمِغِيَّةِ  
وَأَبُو سَلَمٍ الْمُتَمَتِّلُ عَنْ أَبِي الْأَعْرَابِيِّ - يَزِيدُ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ -

أَنَّ عُمَانَ بْنَ عِمَارَةَ الْمُرِّي أَخْبَرَهُمْ أَنَّ شَيْخًا مِنْهُمْ مِنْ بَنِي مَرْهَ حَدَّثَهُ أَنَّهُ خَرَجَ  
إِلَى أَرْضِ بَنِي عَامِرٍ لِيَلْقَى الْمُجَنُونَ، قَالَ: فَدَلَّيْتُ عَلَى مَحَلَّتِهِ فَاتَيْتُهَا، فَإِذَا أَبُوهُ شَيْخٌ  
كَبِيرٌ وَإِخْوَتُهُ لَهُ رِجَالٌ، وَإِذَا نَعْمٌ كَثِيرٌ وَخَيْرٌ ظَاهِرٌ، فَسَأَلْتُهُمْ عَنْهُ فَاسْتَعْبَدُوا جَمِيعًا،  
وَقَالَ الشَّيْخُ: وَاللَّهِ لَوْ كَانَ آتَرَفِي تَسَى مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ وَأَحْبَبُّهُمْ إِلَيَّ! وَإِنَّهُ هَوِيَ أَمْرَاهُ  
مِنْ قَوْمِهِ، وَاللَّهِ مَا كَانَتْ تَطْمَعُ فِي مِثْلِهِ، فَلَمَّا أَنْ فَشَا أَمْرُهُ وَأَمْرُهَا كَرِهَ أَبُوهَا  
أَنْ يُزَوِّجَهَا مِنْهُ بَعْدَ ظُهُورِ الْخَبَرِ فَزَوَّجَهَا مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، فَذَهَبَ عَقْلُ ابْنِ وَلِحَقَّهُ خَبَلٌ  
وَهَامَ فِي الْفَيَاقِ وَجَدَّهَا عَلَيْهَا خُبْسَانُهُ وَقَيْنَاهُ، فَعَمِلَ يَعْشُ لِسَانَهُ وَشَغَبَتْهُ حَتَّى خَفَا  
[عَلَيْهِ] أَنْ يَقْطَعَهَا نَحْلًا سَيْلًا، فَهَوِيَهُمْ فِي [هَذِهِ] الْفَيَاقِ مَعَ الْوَحُوشِ يُذْعَبُ إِلَيْهِ  
كُلُّ يَوْمٍ بِطَعَامِهِ فَيُوضَعُ لَهُ حَيْثُ يَرَاهُ، فَإِذَا تَحَوَّاهُ عَنْهُ جَاءَ فَأَكَلَ مِنْهُ. قَالَ:  
فَسَأَلْتُهُمْ أَنْ يَدُلُّونِي عَلَيْهِ، فَدَنَوْنِي عَلَى قَتَى مِنَ الْحَيِّ كَانَ صَدِيقًا لَهُ وَقَالُوا: إِنَّهُ  
لَا يَنْسُ إِلَّا بِهِ وَلَا يَأْخُذُ أَشْعَارَهُ عَنْهُ غَيْرُهُ، فَاتَيْتُهُ فَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ يَدُلَّنِي عَلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ:  
إِنْ كُنْتَ تَرِيدُ شِعْرَهُ فَكُلِّ شِعْرًا قَالَهُ إِلَيَّ أَمْسِ عِنْدِي، وَأَنَا ذَاهِبٌ إِلَيْهِ غَدًا فَإِنْ كَانَ  
فَلَنْ شَيْءَ أَتَيْتُكَ بِهِ، فَقُلْتُ: بَلْ [أُرِيدُ أَنْ] تَدُلَّنِي عَلَيْهِ لِأَتِيَهُ، فَقَالَ لِي: إِنَّهُ إِنْ تَمَرَّ  
مِنْكَ تَمَرٌ مَنِي فَيَذْهَبُ شِعْرُهُ، فَاتَيْتُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَدُلَّنِي عَلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ: أَطْلُبْ فِي هَذِهِ الصَّحَارَى  
[فَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُ] فَادْدُنْ [مِنْهُ] مَتْنِيًا وَلَا تُرْهِ أَنْكَ تَهْبُؤُهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَهْدُوكَ وَيَتَوَعَّدُكَ

(١) كذا في س، م، ح. وفي باقي النسخ: «تَمَّ كُنْيَةُ» بفتح. وكلامها صحيح لأن النعم

يذكر ويؤنس. (٢) في س: «مَكَان». (٣) زائدة في س. (٤) كذا

في أغلب الأصول. وفي س: «بعضهما».



أَنْ يَرِيكَ بَشِيءَ ، فَلَا يَرُوعَنَّكَ وَأَجْلِسْ صَارِقًا بِصِرِّكَ عَنْهُ وَأَحْظَهِ أَجْبَانًا ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُ قَدْ سَكَنَ مِنْ نِفَارِهِ فَأَنْشِدْهُ شِعْرًا غَزَلًا ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَرَوِي مِنْ شِعْرِ قَيْسِ بْنِ ذَرِيخٍ شَيْئًا فَأَنْشِدْهُ إِيَّاهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُعْجَبٌ بِهِ ؛ فَخَرَجْتُ فَطَلْتُ يَوْمِي إِلَى الْمَصْرِ فَوَجَدْتُهُ جَالِسًا عَلَى رَمْلٍ قَدْ خَطَّ فِيهِ بِأَصْبَعِهِ خُطُوطًا ، فَدَنَوْتُ مِنْهُ غَيْرَ مُتَقَبِّضٍ ، فَفَرَمَنِي نَفُورَ الْوَحْشِ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ ، وَإِلَى جَانِبِهِ أَحْجَارٌ فَتَنَزَّلْتُ حِجْرًا فَأَعْرَضْتُ عَنْهُ ، فَكُنْتُ سَاعَةً كَأَنَّهُ نَافِرٌ يَرِيدُ الْقِيَامَ ، فَلَمَّا طَالَ جُلُوسِي سَكَنَ وَأَقْبَلَ بِخَطِّ أَصْبَعِهِ ، فَأَقْبَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ وَقُلْتُ : أَحْسَنَ وَاللَّهِ قَيْسُ بْنُ ذَرِيخٍ حَيْثُ يَقُولُ :

أَلَا يَا غُرَابَ الْبَيْنِ وَيْحَكَ نَبِيٌّ • بَعَلَمِكَ فِي لُبِّي وَأَنْتَ خَبِيرٌ  
فَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ تُخْبِرْ بَشِيءٍ عِلْمَتَهُ • فَلَا طَرْتُ إِلَّا وَالْجَنَاحُ كَسِيرٌ  
وَدُرْتُ بِأَعْدَاءِ حَيُّكَ فِيهِمْ • كَمَا قَدْ تَرَانِي بِالْحَبِيبِ أَدُورُ

فَأَقْبَلَ عَلَيَّ وَهُوَ يَكِي فَقَالَ : أَحْسَنَ وَاللَّهِ ، وَأَنَا أَحْسَنُ مِنْهُ قَوْلًا حَيْثُ أَقُولُ :  
كَأَنَّ الْقَلْبَ لَيْلَةً قِيلَ يُغْدَى • بِلَيْلِ الْعَامِرِيَّةِ أَوْ يُرَاحُ  
قَطَاةٌ عَزَاهَا شَرُّكَ نَبَاتٌ • تُجَادِبُهُ وَقَدْ عَلِقَ الْجَنَاحُ  
فَأَمْسَكْتُ عَنْهُ هُنَيْهَةً • ثُمَّ أَقْبَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ فَقُلْتُ : وَأَحْسَنَ وَاللَّهِ قَيْسُ بْنُ ذَرِيخٍ  
حَيْثُ يَقُولُ :

وَأِنِّي لَمُغْنِي دَمْعَ عَيْنِي بِالْبُكََا • حِذَارًا لِمَا قَدْ كَانَ أَوْ هُوَ كَانُ  
وَقَالُوا غَدًا أَوْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ بَلِيلَةٌ • فَسِرَاقُ حَبِيبٍ لَمْ يَبْنِ وَهُوَ بَانُ  
وَمَا كُنْتُ أَخْشَى أَنْ تَكُونَ مَنِيَّتِي • بِكَفِّكَ إِلَّا أَنْ مَنْ حَانَ حَائِنُ

(١) كذا في ت ، ب . وفي سائر النسخ : « فأت » . بالقاء وقد انفقت جميع النسخ  
في الروايات الآتية ثبت على الواو . (٢) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي س : « فلاحنت » .  
(٣) كذا في هذا الشطر في جميع النسخ ، وقد ورد في المديح هكذا : « بكفر إلا أن ما حان حائن » .

قال : فبكي - والله - حتى ظننتُ أن نَفَسَه قد فاضَتْ ، وقد رأيتُ دموعَه قد  
بَلَّتِ الرملَ الذي بين يديه ، ثم قال : أحسنَ لعمركَ اللهُ ، وأنا والله أشعرُ منه حيث أقول :

### صوت

وأذنبتي حتى إذا ما سَبَيْتِي \* بقوبٍ يُجِلُّ العَصَمَ سَهْلَ الأباطِحِ<sup>(١)</sup>  
تاءيتُ عني حينَ لا لي حيلةٌ \* وخَلَفْتَ ما خَلَفَ بين الجِوَاحِ<sup>(٢)</sup>

- ويروي : «وَعَادَرْتُ مَا عَادَرْتُ ...» - ثم سَحَتْ له طيبةٌ فَوَثَبَ يَدُوْهَا خَلْفَهَا  
حتى غابَ عني وَأَنصَرَفْتُ ، وَعُدْتُ من غِدٍ فَطَلَبْتُهُ فَمَ أَجَدَهُ ، وجاءتْ أَمْرَأَةٌ كَانَتْ  
تَصْنَعُ له طَعَامَهُ إلى الطَّعَامِ فَوَجَدْتُهُ بِجَاهِهِ ، فَلَمَّا كَانَ في اليَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ غَدَوْتُ وَجَاءَ أَهْلُهُ  
مَعِي فَطَلَبْنَاهُ يَوْمًا فَلَمْ نَجِدْهُ ، وَغَدَوْنَا في اليَوْمِ الرَّابِعِ نَسْتَقْرِى أثرَه حتى وَجَدْنَاهُ  
في وَادٍ كَثِيرِ الْحِجَارَةِ خَيْشٍ ، وَهُوَ مَيِّتٌ بَيْنَ تِلْكَ الْحِجَارَةِ ، فَاحْتَمَلَهُ أَهْلُهُ فَغَسَلُوهُ  
وَكَفَنُوهُ وَدَفَنُوهُ .

قال المهيمُ : لَخَذْتُ جَمَاعَةً من بنى عامرٍ : أنه لم يَبْقَ فَنَاءٌ من بنى جَعْدَةَ وَلَا بنى  
الحَرِيشِ إِلَّا خَرَجْتُ حَاسِرَةً صَارِخَةً عَلَيْهِ تَدْبُهُ ، وَاجْتَمَعَ قِيَانُ الْحَيِّ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ  
أَحْرَبُكَاءَ ، وَيَنْشَجُونَ عَلَيْهِ أَشَدَّ نَشِيجٍ ، وَحَضَرَهُمْ حَتَّى لَيْلٍ مُعَزِّينَ وَأَبُوها مَعِينٌ فَكَانَ  
أَشَدَّ الْقَوْمِ جَزَعًا وَبَكَاءً عَلَيْهِ ، وَجَعَلَ يَقُولُ : مَا عَلِمْنَا أَنَّ الْأَمْرَ يَلُفُّ كُلَّ هَذَا ، وَلَكِنِّي  
كَنتُ أَمْرًا عَرِيبًا أَخَافُ مِنَ الْعَارِ وَفُجِيعِ الْأَحْذَوْتِ مَا يَخَافُهُ مِثْلِي ، فَزَوَّجْتُهَا

الحزن على الغيوت  
وندم أبي ليل على  
عدم تزويجه بها

(١) العصم : جمع أعصم وهو الوعل الذي في ذراعيه بياض . والوعل : تيس الجبل . يريد أن قولها  
يجلب العصم ويستولها من الجبال وهي ساكنة إلى الأباطح السهلة . (٢) في ش «وَعَادَرْتُ  
مَا عَادَرْتُ بَيْنَ الْجَوَاحِ» وهو المواقف في الديوان وترتبط الأسماء . (٣) كذا في جميع  
الأصول وفي ش «وَبَرَوَى وَخَلَفْتَ مَا خَلَفْتَ» . (٤) كذا في ش . وفي باقي النسخ طعاما .

ونجرت عن يدي ، ولو علمت أن أمره يحسرى على هذا ما أخرجتها عن يده  
ولا أحملت ما كان علي في ذلك . قال : فأرني يوم كان أكثر باكية وباجعا على  
بيت من يومئذ .

نسبة ما في هذا الخبر من الأغاني

(٢) [ منها ] الصوت الذي أوله :

ألا يا غرابَ البين ويحك تبني . بعلك في بُني وأنتَ خيرُ  
الفناء لأبنِ حمز ثقيلاً أولُ بالوسطى عن المشامي ، وذكر إبراهيم أن فيه لحناً  
لحم . وفي رواية ابن الأعرابي أنه أنشده مكان :  
ألا يا غرابَ البين ويحك تبني . بعلك في بُني وأنتَ خيرُ

### صوت

ألا يا غرابَ البين هل أنتَ تُحسرى . بخير كما خبرتَ بالنأي والشَّرَّ  
وخبرتَ أن قد جدَّ بيتٌ وقربوا . جبالاً لبينٍ مُثقلاتٍ من الغدير  
وهجتَ قذى عينٍ بلُبنٍ مريضٍ . إذا ذُكرتَ فاضتْ مدامعها تحسرى  
وقلتَ كذالك الدهرُ ما زال فاجعاً . صدقتَ وهل شيءٌ بياقٍ على الدهرِ

(١) في جميع الأصول التي بين أيدينا « يوما » بالسب وظاهر مخالفتها للقواعد .

(٢) زيادة في ت .

(٣) في ت « الحسين بن حمزة » وفيها تصريح باسمه . (٤) كذا في ت . وفي حائر

النسخ : « أخبرت ... » . (٥) في ت « لبني » . (٦) في ت

« قلت » .

الشعر نقيس بن ذريح . والغناء لأبن جامع ، ثقیلٌ أولُ بالسَّبَةِ في مجرى البصر  
عن إحقاق . وفيه لَبَحٌ ثَقِيلٌ أولُ بالوسطى عن عمرو . وفيه لَدَحَانٌ ثَانِي ثَقِيلٌ عن  
المشامي وعبد الله بن موسى .

ومنها الصوت الذي أوله :

كَأَنَّ الْقَلْبَ لَيْلَةً قِيلَ يُقْدَى • بِلَيْلِ الْعَامِرِيَّةِ أَوْ بُرَاحُ

ومنها الصوت الذي أوله :

وَأَدْنَيْتَنِي حَتَّى إِذَا مَا سَبَيْتَنِي • بِقَوْلِ يُحْيِلُ الْعُصَمَاءَ سَهْلَ الْأَبَاطِحِ  
الغناء لإبراهيم ، خفيفٌ ثَقِيلٌ بالوسطى عن المشامي .

أخبرنا الحسين بن القاسم الكوكبي قال حدثنا الفضل الرقي عن محمد بن حبيب

قال :

بكا، ابن ليل على  
المجنون وشعر  
وجد بعد موت  
المجنون في خوخة

لما مات مجنون بني عامر وجد في أرض خَشْنَةٍ بين حجارة سود ، فحضر أهله  
(١) وحضر [معهم] أبو ليل - المرأة التي كان يهاها - وهو متذم من أهله ، فلما رآه مبتا  
بكى وأسترجع وعلم أنه قد شَرِكَ في هلاكه . فبينما هم يَتَلَبَّونه إذ وجدوا جُرْفَةً فيها  
مكتوبٌ :

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الشَّيْخُ الَّذِي مَا بِنَا يَرْضَى • شَقِيتَ وَلَا هُنَّتَ مِنْ عَيْشِكَ الْفَضَا  
شَقِيتَ كَمَا أَشَقِيتَنِي وَتَرَكْتَنِي • أَهْمٌ مَعَ الْهَسَالِكِ لَا أَضَعُمُ الْفَضَا (٢)

- (١) زيادة في ش . (٢) أي متكلف متعجب . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ .  
وفي ش وتزيين الأسوق : « اخفضا » . وفي ديوانه : « ولا أدركت من عيشك اخفضا » .  
(٤) كذا في ش وتزيين الأسواق والديوان . وفي أغلب النسخ ذكر بدل هذا البيت البيت الأخير :  
« كان لجاج الأرض حلقة خاتم • على فارتداد طول ولا عرضا »

ثم كرر هذا البيت مرة ثانية بعد كلمة صوت

## صوت

كَانَتْ قَوَادِي فِي مَخَالِب طَائِرٍ . إِذَا ذُكِرَتْ لَيْلَى نَشَدَ بِهَا قَبْضًا  
كَانَ فِجَاجُ الْأَرْضِ حَلْقَةً خَاتِمٍ . عَنِ - فَمَا تَزِدُّهُ طُولًا وَلَا عَرْضًا  
فِي هَذَيْنِ الْبَيْتَيْنِ رَمْلٌ يَنْسَبُ إِلَى سُلَيْمٍ وَإِلَى ابْنِ عَمْرٍو، وَذَكَرَ حَبِشٌ وَالْمَشَامِيُّ  
أَنَّهُ لِإِسْحَاقَ .

أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ حَنْفٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو سَعِيدٍ الشُّكْرِيُّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ حَبِيبٍ  
قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي بَعْضُ التَّشْبِيرِيِّينَ (١) عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ :

مَرَرْتُ بِالْمَجْنُونِ وَهُوَ مُشْرِفٌ عَلَى وَادٍ فِي أَيَّامِ الرَّبِيعِ ، وَذَلِكَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْتَلِطَ ،  
وَهُوَ يَتَنَقَّى بِشِعْرٍ لَمْ أَفْهَمْهُ ، فَيَصْحَتُ بِهِ : يَا قَيْسُ ، أَمَا تَسْفُكُ لَيْلَى عَنِ الْفَنَاءِ وَالطَّرِبِ !  
تَتَنَفَّسُ تَنْفَسًا ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّ جِازِمَةَ قَدْ أَتَقَدَّتْ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ :

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وَمَا أُشْرِفُ الْأَيْقَاعَ إِلَّا صَابَةً . وَلَا أُنْشِدُ الْأَشْعَارَ إِلَّا تَدَاوِيًا  
وَقَدْ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الشَّيْبَيْنِ بَعْدَ مَا . يَضْطَّانُ جَهْدُ الظَّنِّ أَنْ لَا تَلْقِيَا  
حَتَّى اللَّهُ أَقْوَامًا يَقُولُونَ إِنِّي . وَجَدْتُ طَوَالَ النَّهْرِ لَعَبَ شَافِيَا

أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مَرْزُوقٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الزُّبَيْرُ بْنُ بَكَّارٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أَبِي  
أُوَيْسٍ قَالَ : اجْتَازَ قَيْسُ بْنُ ذَرِيحٍ بِالْمَجْنُونِ وَهُوَ جَالِسٌ وَحْدَهُ فِي نَادِي قَوْمِهِ ، وَكَانَ

استقاروه بقيس بن  
ذريح وطلبه منه  
بلاغ سلامه ليل

(١) في ت : « الترشيين » . (٢) الجازيم : ضريح الفزاد . وفي ت : « قد انصدت » .  
(٣) الأيقاع : جمع يقع كاللقاع : ما أشرف وعلا من الرمل . (٤) كذا في أغلب النسخ .  
والجهد : الغاية . وفي ت وتزيين الأسواق والديوان : « كل الظن » . (٥) يقال لجاهل : قبحه  
ولعله وأجده . (٦) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ت وتزيين الأسواق والديوان : « إنا وجدنا » .

كَلَّ واحد منهما مشتاقا إلى لقاء الآخر، وكان المجنون قبل توحشه لا يجلس إلا مفردا ولا يُحدث أحدا ولا يرد على متكلم جوابا ولا على مُسلم سلاما، فسلم عليه قيس بن ذريح فلم يرد عليه السلام؛ فقال له : يا أحمى، أنا قيس بن ذريح، فوثب إليه فعاقبه وقال : مرحبا بك يا أحمى، أنا والله مذهب<sup>(١)</sup> [بى] مُشترك اللب فلا تأمى، فتحدثنا ساعة وتساكبا وبكبا، ثم قال له المجنون : يا أحمى، إن حى ليل منا قريب، فهل لك أن تمضى إليها فتلقها عنى السلام؟ فقال له : أفعل . فضى قيس بن ذريح حتى أتى نيل فلم وأنسب؛ فقالت له : حياك الله، ألك حاجة؟ قال : نعم، ابن عمك أرسلنى إليك بالسلام؛ فاطرقت ثم قالت : ما كنت أهلا للتجبة لو علمت أنك رسولهُ، قل له عنى : أرايت قولك :

أَبْتُ لَيْلَةً بِالْقَيْلِ يَا أُمَ مَالِكٍ • لَكُمْ غَيْرَ حَبِّ صَادِقٍ لَيْسَ يَكْتَبُ<sup>(٢)</sup>  
أَلَا إِنَّمَا أَبْقَيْتُ يَا أُمَ مَالِكٍ • صَدَى أَيْخَانَتُحِبُّ بِهِ الرِّيحُ يَذْهَبُ<sup>(٣)</sup>

أخبرنى عن ليلة القيل، أى ليلة هى ؟ وهل خلوتُ معك فى القيل أو غيره ليلًا أو نهارًا؟ فقال لها قيس : يابنة عم ، إن الناس تأولوا كلامه على غير ما أراد ، فلا تكونى مثلهم، إنما أخبر أنه رأى ليلة القيل فذهبت بقلبه، لأنه عاك بسوء؛ قال : فاطرقت طويلا ودموعها تجري وحى تكفكفها، ثم ألتحبت حتى قلت تقطعت حيازيمها، ثم قالت : أقرأ على ابن عمى السلام، وقل له : بنسى أنت! والله إن وجدى بك لفوق ما تجدد، ولكن لا حيلة لى فىك؛ فأنصرف قيس إليه ليخبره فلم يحمله .

(١) زيادة فى ت . (٢) القيل بافتح ثم السكون : اسم وادلى جمدة .

(٣) انظر الكلام على معنى الصدى فيما تقدم فى ص ١٩ حاشية رقم ٩ من هذا الجزء .

(٤) فى هذين البيتين اقراء لاختلافهما بحركة الروى ضا وكرا وقد ورد هذا البيت الاخير فى جملة آيات مكسورة الروى فى ص ١٩ من هذا الجزء .

أخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثني محمد بن القاسم بن مَهْرُوبَةَ قال حدثني  
عَمِّي عن ابن الصباح عن ابن الكلبي عن أبيه قال : مرَّ المجنونُ بعدَ اختلاطه بليلى  
[وهي] تمشي في ظاهر البيوت بعدَ فقْدِ لها طويلاً ، فلما رآها بكى حتى سقط على  
وجهه منشياً عليه ، فأنصرفت خوفاً من أهلها أن يلقوها عنده ، فكث كذلك ملياً  
ثم أفاق وأتانا يقول :

بكي فرحاً بيليل إذ رآها • محبٌ لا يرى حتّى سواها  
لقد ظفرتُ بدهاء ونال مُلْكاً • لئن كانت تراه كما يراها  
الغناء لأبىن المكي رملٌ بالنصر • وفيه لعربٌ قبيلٌ أوّلُ عن المشامي • وفيه  
خفيفٌ رملٌ ليزيد حوراء • وقد تُسبِّحُ لحنهُ إلى أبىن المكي ولحنُ أبىن المكي إليه •

### صوت

من المائة المختارة من رواية علي بن يحيى  
رُبَّ رَكِبٍ قد أناخوا عندنا • يشربون الخمرَ بالماء الزلال  
عَصَفُ الدهرُ بهم فَاتَقَرَّضُوا • وكذلك الدهرُ حالاً بعد حالٍ  
الشعر لعدى بن زيد العبادي ، والغناء لأبىن مُحَرِّزٍ ، ولحنهُ المختارُ خفيفٌ [رملٍ]  
بإطلاق الوتر في مجرى الوسطى عن إسماعيل • وفيه خفيفٌ رملٍ [آخر بالنصر] ابتداءً

- (١) كذا في ش ، وهو ما اتفقت عليه النسخ في مواضع تقدّمت في الجزء الأوّل من الأغاني  
وفي هذا الجزء أيضاً . وفي أغلب النسخ « موسى بن مَهْرُوبَةَ » .  
(٢) زيادة في ش . (٣) كذا في أغلب النسخ . وفي ب ، س ، ح : « تصريف »  
وهو تحريف . (٤) في ش : « وضاب عيشاً » . (٥) كذا في أغلب النسخ .  
وفي ب ، س : « غورا » بانطاء المعجمة وهو تحريف وستأتي ترجمته ، في الجزء الثالث من الأغاني  
طبع بولاق . (٦) أي ذهب بهم وأهلكهم . (٧) زيادة في ش .

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